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# SAINT PAULS.

JUNE, 1869.

## THE SACRISTAN'S HOUSEHOLD.

A STORY OF LIPPE-DETMOLD.

### CHAPTER XXXV.

#### THE CHARCOAL-BURNER'S STORY.

It will be necessary to lay before the reader, in a somewhat condensed form, the statement made in the sacristan's kitchen, with much agitation, incoherence, and repetition, by Joachim Müller.

Before his interview with the charcoal-burner, Major von Groll was already convinced in his own mind that Liese was the daughter of his deceased brother-in-law by the beautiful waitress at the inn in Meinberg. But the question whether their union had been a lawful one, and the girl's birth legitimate, was still doubtful to him. It would certainly never have entered his head to conjecture that Ernest, Baron Dornberg, had condescended to such a mésalliance, but for the death-bed scene described by the priest Souka. The idea that he had so condescended was very shocking to Major von Groll. No beauty, no sweetness, no virtue on the part of the woman, could excuse so terrible a breach of the sacred duties which a nobly-born man owes to his family and his race. But shocking as such a marriage might be, to deny and repudiate it when made was more shocking still. Could Ernest have been guilty of such baseness? The charcoal-burner's story very decisively answered that question; and, moreover,—if it was to be believed,—convicted Baron Dornberg of such an amount of additional baseness as made the Major aghast to listen to. It was briefly this.

After a year or two spent in the service of the family with whom he had left Pymont, Joachim went one summer with his young master, the eldest son of the house, a gay reckless spendthrift, to the baths of Meinberg. There they saw Barbara Lehmann, whose remarkable loveliness was famed throughout all the district round. Many people came to the Rose Inn, where she was waitress, merely

to see her. But no tongue could say an evil word of the girl's reputation. The worst fault that ill-nature could find with her was that she valued herself too much on her good looks, and was too high and proud for one in her station. Joachim's master, Baron Ernest Dornberg, was at Meinberg incognito, and assumed merely his two Christian names, Ludwig Ernest. He speedily fell in love with the beautiful Barbara, and finding it hopeless to induce her to listen to his suit on any other terms, made up his mind to marry her secretly.

On Joachim she appeared to have exercised unbounded and extraordinary influence. He became, in fact, desperately and hopelessly in love with her. He did not know whether she ever suspected his passion; he only knew that she was always sweet and kind to him, and that he would willingly have laid down his life to serve her.

The Baron and Barbara eloped from Meinberg, attended only by Joachim. They crossed the frontier of the Austrian empire, and were married by an old Catholic priest at an obscure village. Joachim was the only witness of the marriage. After the ceremony Baron Dornberg took his bride to an old country house in a secluded spot, which he had hired for a time. There he remained with her as long as he could, only occasionally leaving her to join his family, who were travelling in Germany from one gay capital to another. In the spring of the year 1847 Barbara gave birth to a daughter. After this event she became very anxious to have her marriage acknowledged. But her husband had always some excellent reason to allege for keeping it secret a while longer; and as she loved him devotedly, she never thought of disputing his wishes. But she grew pale, and thin, and downcast; and Joachim fancied that she began to perceive that which his love-quickened observation in all that related to her had taught him for some time past,—namely, that her husband's love for her was cooling. She was a tie and a restraint upon him; and as he loved himself better than anything else in the world, that vexed him, and made him come to see her seldomer, and stay but a short time when he did come. When his infant daughter was but a few months old the Baron left the secluded country house for Munich, where his mother then lived. And the visit, thus ended, proved to be the last he ever paid to his low-born bride. From this point we may pursue the story in Joachim's own words.

"Within a very short time afterwards we servants began to hear a talk that Baron Ernest was to marry a great heiress, and that the old Baroness his mother had brought the match about. At first I just laughed at it in my sleeve, knowing, as I thought, that it was all foolish gabble. But by-and-by things began to look serious. The Baron was very smooth and civil to me when I came in his way, but he shunned me. One day I made up my mind to speak to him, and in spite of his trying to avoid me I went into his room, and told him

of the rumours that I had heard. He was half frightened, half angry, but he kept himself down ; and he took a handsome gold pin, with a bright red stone in it, out of his cravat, and turned it about in his fingers whilst I was speaking to him. ' Pooh ! ' said he at last, looking at me in a strange way. ' You are a faithful fellow, Joachim, and you have never been sufficiently rewarded. Take this little token of my satisfaction.' I pushed the pin away from me, and said that I thanked him, but that the best reward he could give me would be to declare that the stories about his engagement to the rich lady were false. Then he changed his tone. ' Why should they be false ? ' ' Why ? ' cried I ; ' because you have a true and lawful wife living at this moment, and if no one else knows it, I do.' He tried to laugh at me, and to say that the marriage with Barbara had been all a sham, and that he had supposed I had known it as well as he. If he became a wealthy man it would be the best thing that could happen for Barbara, for he would take care of her and the child, and he would behave liberally to all who had served him well. I could have strangled him then and there, the false lying villain ! He saw that I looked dangerous, I suppose, for he made to the door as quick as he could. I had only just time to call to him that I would never let such a wrong be done while I had breath, before he was away down the main staircase. In a minute or two the chambermaid came to the door of the room, looked in, saw me there, and went away again. How I felt it would be hard for me to tell you, and it wouldn't matter to any one to know it if I could. The Baron didn't leave me long to make up my mind what I would do. That afternoon I was arrested on the charge of stealing a valuable pin, the property of my master. The pin had been found hidden in the mattress of my bed.

" Well, what was the good of my denying, or protesting, or swearing that I had never touched the pin, that I had never stolen anything in my life ? Do you think they believed my word against the Baron's ? And if I swore, he swore. An oath was nothing to him ; he had broken many. When they asked him if he could speak to my previous character, he said that I had many good qualities, and had been a favourite servant ; but he was grieved to confess that he had noticed little acts of dishonesty in me before, and had hoped to cure me by kindness and forgiveness. He was as white as could be, and shook like a leaf, and he never once turned his eyes on me ; and all the cute law gentlemen they praised up his feeling heart, and said how hardened I must be to rob so good a master. That was more than I could bear quietly. I broke out like a madman, and told what I knew of Baron Dornberg, and how he wanted to get me out of the way because I was the only one that knew what would well-nigh ruin him, and spoil his rich marriage. But it was of no use. Of course it was of no use. There was the evidence of the pin being found in my bed. There was the evidence of the girl who

had seen me alone in my master's room looking all strange and 'flustered,' as she said. There was the evidence of my master 'who had been so good to me.' I was guilty; and what was worse, I had tried to screen myself by making vile accusations against the Baron. Yes; it was clear that I was a black-hearted, lying wretch. So I was condemned to ten years' imprisonment, and Baron Dornberg left the court with a face that might have shown any honest man what he was, to my thinking.

"They had a good deal of trouble with me, had my jailers. Though I don't say that they were bad people, or treated me bad. They did their duty, I suppose. But I was furious. I stormed and struggled like a madman. I was almost mad. The thought of what was in store for Barbara was always before me; and there was I, the only one that could help her, the only one that could clear her good name, shut up like a wild beast in a cage. The end of it was that I got brain-fever. That's what the doctor called it. When I began to know myself again I was weak as a baby, and for a long time I couldn't remember clear what had happened before they put me in prison. They took good care of me until I got my strength again; then, of course, I had to work like the others. I stayed out my term, and the morning I stepped outside the prison-doors I almost wished they would close upon me again. I had lost everything in the world. I was a disgraced, ruined man, that honest folks would draw their clothes back from touching if they were told I had just been let out of the Zuchthaus. Well, and yet,—you may believe me or not,—I swear solemnly, and would if it was with my last breath, that I was innocent; and that Baron Ernest put that jewel in my bed himself,—he and no other."

In answer to some further inquiries, Joachim declared that on his release he had made for the old country house where Barbara had been living with her baby, but had found no trace of her. Strangers were in the place who knew nothing of its former occupants. At last he discovered an old peasant woman who remembered the beautiful young woman that had lived there so shut up and solitary. The old woman had been employed as servant about the place. The beautiful young woman had gone away all of a sudden, taking her little girl with her. The child was delicate, and the old peasant felt pretty sure that it would not live. He continued to seek the unfortunate girl as best he could, and traced her northward into Hanover. There he found the last sad page of her history written on a tombstone in a little suburban cemetery. The inscription had been put there by honest Franz Lehmann, and consisted of the words—

**BARBARA LEHMANN,**

AGED TWENTY-TWO YEARS.

"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."



And that was the end of the story.

Lieschen had not been present during Joachim's recital to the Major. Previous to drawing forth that recital it had been necessary to win the charcoal-burner's confidence by the most solemn assurances that only good was meant to Liese, and that whatever might be the result of the Major's investigations, right should be done to her. When, however, Joachim found on finishing his story that the man to whom he was speaking was the brother-in-law of Ernest Dornberg, and the husband of the supposed heir-at-law to the late Baron's property, he had small hope that Liese's claims would fare very well in the Major's hands. But he was agreeably surprised to find that Major von Groll expressed no incredulity of his statement. The honest gentleman would have been heartily glad could he have disbelieved every word of it, but he could not. He dismissed Joachim, bidding him not to go too far afield, but to be at hand when wanted; and, after a moment's reflection, gave him leave to occupy his old quarters in the hunting-lodge for a few nights longer, as affording a haunt where he might surely be found after nightfall.

The Major's confidence in Von Schleppers had been somewhat shaken of late. It began to appear to him that the Justizrath was in the habit of concealing many things from him, and of acting in many matters entirely without reference to his chief's opinion. The Major even had a glimpse of the fact that the Justizrath occasionally demanded his, Von Groll's, opinion after all arrangements which that opinion could modify had been decisively made. Before leaving Horn the Major, after much painful hesitation, resolved to lay the case before the sacristan. Under his roof the girl must in any case remain for the present. He was a much-respected man, full of years, reputed wise, and of unblemished probity; and the truth was, that the Major felt greatly the need of some counsellor. So, when Joachim had departed, the Major requested to be allowed a private interview with the Herr Küster.

Sophie and Liese, attending to their domestic concerns in the poultry-yard and out-buildings, could not help leaving off work every instant to form whispered conjectures as to what possibly could be going on. The charcoal-burner's strange emotion at sight of a picture which Liese had not been allowed to see; the grave, solemn manner in which the land-steward had requested her to withdraw; the long colloquy that had then taken place between him and Joachim Müller; and the abrupt departure of the latter without a word of explanation,—were all discussed over and over again between the two women. Meanwhile the Major was repeating the main points of the charcoal-burner's narrative to the astonished ears of Simon Schnarcher.

The old man had been immensely flattered at first by the Major's announcement that he wished to ask his advice. Simon was by no

means the man to feel any smallest misgiving as to his own perfect competence to advise on any conceivable subject; therefore he took his seat with much dignity in the great arm-chair, prepared to pour forth the treasures of his experience and wisdom for the Major's benefit, and altogether in a state of great complacency. What he heard, however, was so wonderful, so altogether strange and unexpected, and involved so many possibilities nearly affecting himself and his household, that for once the sacristan was dumbfounded. The Major, in telling the story, suppressed the name of Barbara's faithless husband,—thus keeping out of sight his own near connection with the matter,—but faithfully related all the particulars given by Joachim respecting the alleged marriage. When Von Groll had finished speaking there was a long pause.

Simon Schnarcher sat grasping the two arms of his chair with his bony yellow fingers, and his bushy white eyebrows were drawn down in such fashion as completely to overshadow the keen black eyes sunk deep in their cavernous hollows. The Major waited, standing bolt upright with his back to the empty stove, and slowly stroking down the long moustache that drooped with that deceptively melancholy curve over his mouth. At length the sacristan gave forth an oracular utterance. "It all turns on one thing,—whether the young woman was really married, or whether she was not."

"Jawohl."

"That black loon can tell the name of the village where he says the ceremony took place?"

"Yes; he has told it to me."

"Then this is my advice:—you send some one to that village to inquire if the man that was parish priest there in the year of grace eighteen hundred and forty-six, is parish priest there still. It may well be that he is; and if so, he can speak to the truth or falseness of the tale. I'm not fond of the Papists myself, but I suppose one might get that much truth out of 'em."

"Good!" exclaimed the Major, who began to think he had done marvellously well in consulting this Solomonic old man.

The sacristan, in no wise outwardly moved by the noble land-steward's approbation, held up one hand as a sign that he had not yet finished speaking, and must not be interrupted. "You find some trustworthy person to send, and meanwhile you hold your peace about this to every one. There would be no good in raising false hopes or vain imaginings in the lass or in the lass's relations at the farm. You say you can't help believing what Blackface says. Well and good; but this is a matter in which your believing ain't enough. There may be other folks who don't believe, and other folks whose fortunes would be pretty considerably altered by this queer thing turning out to be true. Why you've taken it all up so

I don't exactly see; but if you want the truth, you send to try and find out the priest that married 'em,—or didn't marry 'em. You asked for my advice. Now you've got it."

"I thank you, Herr Küster," said the Major, offering his hand with much solemnity to the old man; "I thank you. Your advice is excellent. I cannot at the present moment enter into an explanation of my motives for being so much interested in this matter. But you shall know the result of my inquiries, for I shall follow your counsel in all but one particular. Instead of sending a messenger I shall go myself."

The Major did go himself,—starting direct from Horn to Paderborn, at which latter place he took the railway to within a few miles of his destination. He sent a note to his wife by the hands of Albrecht, informing her that "business" would take him into Austria for a short time, and assuring her that he was well, and would be back at home with her on the fourth day from that of his departure.

The interval was spent by the sacristan in a very singular state of mind. First, floating topmost on the surface, were a kind of mysterious self-importance, and an extra amount of loftiness of demeanour towards the "womenfolk," who naturally,—poor weak creatures!—were dying to know what he had it in his power to reveal, but were too well-trained to venture upon any direct inquiries. Below these vain-glorious emotions, and much more carefully concealed, was a mixture of pleasure and regret at the anticipation of Liese's altered fortunes. That spitfire at the farm would be rare and vexed when she heard it, if it so turned out that the lass was well born and an heiress. And he, Simon Schnarcher, would have had a hand in the bringing to light of the truth. But then the little lass would go away,—go away far enough from him, and from Horn, and from Detmold. Ach leider! It was a drear, lonely world for old folks.

Then deeper in his heart than all this lay a yearning pity for Otto. Otto loved the lass. It was all foolish boy-and-girl nonsense, no doubt. Still Otto fancied he loved her, anyway; and so it was real enough to him. Now, if this maiden proved to be a high-born lady, good-bye of course to all love-making between her and the sacristan's nephew. Not but that as far as he,—Simon,—could see, Otto was worth any half-dozen of your fine folks, take it which way you might. Then there were twinges of painful remembrance;—how he himself had once looked upon any connection with Lehmann's Liese, much as these great people would, he supposed, be apt to look upon a connection with Otto. "But that's different," he told himself obstinately;—"quite, quite different."

And then at last his dogged pride would give way for a moment, and he would cry out with the hot tears in his aged eyes,—“Oh, my

boy, my boy! God knows if I shall ever see thee more. And if thou 'scape the murderous weapons of the fighting men, thou'lt come back home to find the lass thou lovest gone and fled out of thy reach. And I drove thee away,—I that promised thy dead father to love thee as mine own! Oh, my boy, my boy!”

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## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### “NOBLESSE OBLIGE.”

NEVER in the whole course of her life, which had extended now over some five-and-forty years, had Amalia Wilhelmina von Groll felt even the faintest approach to the violent emotions of anger, amazement, disappointment, and a pervading sense of utterly impotent spitefulness, which raged in her bosom when, on his return to Detmold, her husband communicated to her the intelligence that there was a living and legitimate daughter of her dead brother,—and, consequently, the rightful inheritor of all that brother's property,—at present residing in the obscure townlet of Horn; and that he,—the Major,—had entirely satisfied himself of the justice of the said daughter's claims, and intended to put no hindrance in the way of their legitimate satisfaction. If I were compelled to select one word which should most comprehensively express the leading traits in Frau von Groll's character, I should choose “greedy.” Frau von Groll was greedy of meat and drink; greedy of personal comfort; greedy of obedience, and deference, and consideration, from those around her; greedy, above all things, of money,—as comprising, according to the teachings of her limited intelligence, all these other good things.

In her rage, she showed her astonished husband plainly the very low position which he occupied in her estimation. Her husband was a fool! A credulous, easy, gullible fool! Oh, if she had but gone to Bohemia herself, instead of trusting to his incompetence! What! were the lying words of a Jesuitical old priest, and a conspiracy trumped up between wretched, low, cunning peasants,—creatures who could have no sense of right and wrong,—to deprive her,—her, Amalia Wilhelmina von Groll, geboren Dornberg,—of the inheritance derived from her family? There could be no law in such a decision! No law that ever was made would deprive her of her property on such absurd grounds. And as to justice——. Where was the justice of disappointing all her hopes, and robbing her of that which she had come to look upon as her own? They would see, that she did not intend to submit tamely. She would dispute the cause inch by inch in every tribunal in Germany. What? It was not a question of law, but of honour? Ferdinand was convinced that the girl Liese was the rightful heiress to the Dornberg estates, and therefore,—being satisfied in his own mind,—did not intend to litigate? Well! well!

—even so,—even granting that Ernest had married the vile, abominable, designing hussy, and had thus for ever sullied the glory of the family 'scutcheon, why should they trouble their heads about it? Charity began at home; and people's first duty was to take care of themselves. Why could they not give the girl a few hundred thalers as a marriage dowry,—if, indeed, any such generosity were called for by the circumstances of the case, which she, for her part, could not altogether admit,—and hold their tongues about the Dornberg estate, and enjoy it quietly? This last utterance shocked and pained her husband more than anything else she had said, and he answered, with a face of intense solemnity, "But, Amalia, I fear you do not understand, that would not be honest,—not to speak of the nicety of honour which our birth and breeding demand from us!" Where to his helpmate responded that such nicety of honour was mere "albernes Geschwätz,"—stuff and nonsense,—and that her husband might at least confine the nicety of his honour to the conduct of his own affairs, and not interfere to beggar her, and rob her of her ancestral inheritance!

The poor Major was beginning to make the discovery that a line of conduct regulated strictly by the "nicest honour" may be applauded by many persons with enthusiasm, so long as it is confined to mere theories, or to the observance of certain social punctilios; but that it is looked upon in a very different light when it assumes the shape of opposition to material interests. No amount of scrupulousness and pride of race appeared ridiculous to Frau von Groll, so long as these qualities were exhibited in the shape of Ferdinand's claims upon others; but it was quite another matter directly they urged him to fulfil to the uttermost the just claims of others upon him! All the painfulness of opposing his wife did not, however, for a moment shake Major von Groll in his resolution.

The lady felt that her only hope lay in the Justizrath von Schlep-pers. To him she flew in secret, immediately after her first stormy interview,—the precursor of many similar ones,—with her husband upon his return home. To her dismay, she found that wily personage by no means disposed to make himself the thorough-going partizan of her views, which she had fondly reckoned upon his proving. Puss-in-boots was far from having any intention of risking his reputation to oblige Frau von Groll.

"I must examine the evidence, my dear madam, if the Major does me the honour to consult me legally. And of course, on the evidence, and the evidence only, will my opinion be formed. I mentioned that to you, if you remember, at a former interview."

"I remember very well what passed at that interview, Herr Justizrath," said the lady, boiling with indignation, "quite as well as you do. And, let me tell you, you may chance to find my memory as good as yours on more points than one." Upon which Frau von

Groll had flounced out of the Justizrath's office, leaving the lawyer in a state of mind which could not be said to be altogether comfortable. But the Major did not ask for Lawyer von Schleppers' professional opinion. He merely informed him, in a curt and rather cool manner, that circumstances had arisen which made it desirable for him to remain a while longer in Detmold, and that, consequently, the writing of his resignation of the land-stewardship would now be indefinitely postponed.

The task of breaking the truth to Liese was confided to Franz Lehmann, who was specially charged by the Major to spare "his niece,"—so he called her, and the words ran through poor Franz like an electric shock,—the pain of hearing all the most tragic part of her mother's story. By which the Major naturally meant all the facts which unequivocally revealed the villainy of her father. "Baron Dornberg acted ill,—very ill; I don't deny it," said the Major. "But I really do believe that he repented at the last, and that, if time and strength had been granted him, he would have made reparation. You see he must always have retained some feeling of tenderness in his heart for his wife Barbara; witness the care with which he preserved her portrait throughout his life."

To all which Franz merely made answer that he hoped Baron Dornberg's tardy repentance had availed to obtain pardon above; though, for his part, he didn't much believe in folks who only began to be sorry when they couldn't possibly go on doing evil any longer. That, Papist or Protestant, he had no doubt the good priest Souka had done the best he could for him. And that as to Lieschen, the Major might rest quite easy in his mind that he,—Franz,—wouldn't trouble her pure spirit by a too detailed description of the conduct of her noble father; but would rather dwell on the sweetness, beauty, and affectionate nature of her peasant mother. Now, the sneer implied in those last words was, it must be owned, rather hard upon the Major, who certainly had been acting throughout with great magnanimity. But Von Groll paid not the least attention to it. Unfortunately, noblemen did occasionally prove to be vile, and their vileness was more deplorable and disgraceful than the vileness of others. Unfortunately, too, human beings did sometimes degrade themselves below the level of the brutes. But, for all that, men were men, and horses were horses!

Little Liese listened with pale, scared face, and parted lips, through which the breath came quickly, to the revelation of her gentle birth and of the dignities that awaited her. She had begged that Sophie might be present during the telling of the "important tidings" which Cousin Franz said he had to communicate to her. And she sat, holding the old woman's hand in her own, whilst she listened. Farmer Lehmann's voice was frequently interrupted by loud exclamations of ecstatic surprise from Sophie, who gave utterance to

"Ach's" and "Oh's," and invocations of "Du Lieber Himmel!" innumerable.

But Lieschen sat quite still and dumb. Only when the farmer put into her hands the portrait of her mother, which the Major had desired should be given to her, her breast heaved and her lips quivered, and she burst out crying. That was her mother!—her mother in all the exquisite bloom of youthful loveliness!—the poor mother whose dead, white face was among the earliest, as it was the most indelible, of her childish memories! This she could take hold of; this she could receive into her heart. It was linked with something tangible in her young life. The arrival of Cousin Franz at Hanover;—the dimly-remembered journey in the waggon through a white, cold world;—everything had seemed white and cold then, except Cousin Franz;—and, lastly, the being carried in through the huge, dark barn, and being set down all strange and dizzy before the pile of blazing pine-logs in the kitchen of the farm at Horn. Yes; that was real.

But all the rest was a dream as yet. She a noble young lady! She, Liese Lelmann! The owner of wealth whose amount was fabulously vast in her eyes! Ach! let her take breath for a moment! It frightened her. It was a dream,—a strange dream. What;—that grave, awful gentleman was her uncle! What, that gnädige Frau who had inspired her with such intense dread and distant, humble reverence, was her aunt! Ach, Himmel! No, no; it was too impossible! Let them go away and leave her with Sophie. Sophie was real. Sophie was her good, true friend. Bitte, bitte; would they leave her quiet with Sophie? Sophie led her away, and unfastened the plaits of her hair, and loosened her girdle, and made her lie down on the sacristan's bed. Yes, on the Herr Küster's very own bed, with its red and black hangings. But that was not surprising. Nothing could ever be surprising any more!

She let Sophie do as she would with her, and lay quite still and passive on the bed. Presently she whispered, "Dear Sophie, would you give me mother's picture, and leave me quite by myself a bit?" And when the old woman was gone out of the room, she clasped the portrait in her arms and kissed it, and cried, "Oh, Otto! oh, Otto!" and wept softly. And then—she fell fast asleep with the picture lying against her breast!

Little Lieschen's mind was wearied out with the strain of trying to receive and realise these wonders that had been told to her; and little Lieschen's body,—never very strong, though sound and healthy,—had suffered somewhat lately from the spirit's constant, wearing anxiety about her absent lover, and from the effort she had made to be brave and to seem cheerful. And the tired mind and the tired body took refuge in sleep, as a child hides its head in its mother's lap. But of course the waking had to come. And by



degrees the absolute terror she had felt on first hearing the news of her changed lot wore off, and left only wonder and strangeness. These, too,—though they were slower in passing away,—did fade somewhat after a few days. Every one around her spoke of the wonderful story, and that helped to familiarise her with its aspect. She had seen the Major again, who had called her “my dear Elisabeth,” and had said to old Sophie that his niece must henceforth be addressed as *Fräulein Dornberg*.

The thought of Otto was never long absent from Liese’s faithful breast. When she became sufficiently collected to consider what were the changes which this discovery would make in her life, the delightful idea dawned upon her that now, surely, there could be no obstacle to her marriage with Otto. If he were poor, no matter. She would be rich. She had no clear notion how long it would be before she should begin to enjoy this wonderful wealth; nor how it would come to her. But at least there could be no need that Otto should continue to wander far from his native place, and to lead the hard life of a soldier. She longed, above all things, to convey the news to him. But,—*ach leider!*—he was so far away. And in this dreadful war-time, how was she sure that a letter would reach him at all?

Sophie’s simplicity was quite as great as Lieschen’s; and the two built up all kinds of delightful things for Otto, without a suspicion that “*Fräulein Dornberg*” must necessarily be far removed from his sphere. The sacristan knew better, and dropped a word of warning to Liese on the subject. He could not make his warning very explicit, because he still adhered to his self-imposed rule of avoiding the mention of Otto’s name. But his words alarmed Liese, and set her thinking uneasily. Could they mean to part her from Otto,—these grand relations? To try to part her from Otto, that was; for nothing short of his own will should make her give him up. She trembled at the thought of her next meeting with the Major. But she had resolved, with all the strength of her love, to say some word to him about her betrothal. She remembered that the Major had spoken kindly of Otto, and had seemed to understand that the young man was very dear to her. But, then, that had been before ——. Oh, dear! oh, dear! if Otto were only here! If he were only not so far away!

She sat herself down under the pear tree, beneath whose shade she had read his letter, and leant her head on her hand, and thought of him. As she so sat, Joachim Müller passed on the other side of the hedge, and pausing, leant over it to look at her. “You are all alone there,” said he at length; and then Liese raised her head, and he saw that there were tears in her eyes. “Ah!” he exclaimed, with a deep sigh, “you are not happy. Do you take no pleasure in your new fortune? Gott! if I had thought it was only to make you sorrowful, I would have died rather than told what I knew.



But,—fool that I was,—why did I not remember that nothing that I touched could bring good to any one?"

Liese was shocked to hear him speak so, and unselfishly tried to shake off her own melancholy mood to cheer him. She was only thinking of dear Otto, and wishing he were near. His absence, at all events, was not Joachim's fault. "He will come back, and you will both be happy,—if there is any happiness for good folks in this world!" Then Lieschen by degrees confessed that she had some reason to fear that her new-found relations would oppose her marriage with Otto.

Joachim heard with a troubled face. "You will be true to him?" said he. "They must yield if you are only true to him."

True to him? True to Otto? Why, what else could she be? True to her own, good, generous, noble Otto, who had given up so much for her sake? If she could be made a queen to-morrow, she would take off her crown and go to Otto very humbly and lay it at his feet; very humbly she would go, and yet proudly too, for how could the girl not be proud whom Otto loved? But it troubled her that she could not tell him all that was in her heart. She had written to him on the 13th of June, and had had no answer. That was before all this strange story had been revealed. Who could tell if he had ever got the letter? Oh, if she could send a letter with wings, that would fly to him wherever he might be! Or, better still, if she had wings wherewith she might fly to him herself!

Joachim listened silently. Suddenly he said, "Will you do one thing for me? Will you put your little hand on the hedge there, and let me kiss it? I won't touch it with my black fist." Liese complied with child-like simplicity. The man bent his head over the small hand lying amongst the green leaves, and touched it with his lips. "God bless thee, child!" he said; "don't fret and fear. Thou'lt not see me again for a while. I'm going to find Otto." And before she could say a word, he strode away, without once looking back, in the direction of the forest.

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## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### THE GUARD IS RELIEVED.

WE left Otto Hemmerich perched on the top of the belfry of Goldenau, and sustaining a state of siege there;—a state of siege with the unusual circumstance that the besiegers were supplying the garrison with victual. For two days this singular state of things lasted, the sentinel being formally called upon, morning and evening, to yield himself up prisoner, and the burghers being as formally warned that on any failure in the supply of food the deadly needle-gun should do terrible execution on them and theirs. On the third day, a toil-worn

wayfarer limped into Goldenau. He was footsore, ragged, dusty; with long, unkempt locks hanging down on to his shoulders, and a queer, wild, shy manner. His first inquiries at the little ale-house were whether a detachment of the —th Prussian regiment of infantry was not stationed at Goldenau, and on being informed, with a sneer of triumph, that they had gone away suddenly in the night season, and had not been seen there more, the stranger's disappointment was manifest.

"Mayhap you're a 'Preusse' yourself?" said the landlord, threateningly. "A spy,—who knows?"

"I'm neither Prussian nor spy," said the traveller, perceiving that there might be some peril for him unless he convinced the Goldenauers that he in nowise belonged to the enemies of Austria. "I was servant to a nobleman at Vienna many years. I'm seeking some one at this moment on business connected with a noble Saxon family at Dornberg, near the Elbe. I've nought to do with Prussians." This reply seemed to pacify the people of the ale-house, and the wayfarer was permitted to eat his bread and cheese in peace.

Presently a little white-headed boy came in, and asked for the rations, and with much ill-humour and swearing, a dish of food and a bottle of wine were put into the child's hands. This incident led to some talk about the obdurate sentry on the belfry, and the revelation that the good folks of Goldenau in their anxiety to seize on a prisoner had undeniably "caught a Tartar."

"And this sentry belongs to the —th Prussian regiment of foot, eh?"

"Ay, confound the cunning knave! But only wait until some of our troops come up this way! The tables will be turned,—Donnerwetter!"

The stranger sauntered out into the village street, and loitered about, watching for another glimpse of the boy Augustin. He looked up at the tower, and saw the dark form of the Prussian sentry standing out against the sky. The sentry's back was towards the street; and it would have been highly dangerous to endeavour in any way to attract the soldier's attention. Indeed, the insignificance and poverty of the stranger's appearance had alone preserved him from molestation hitherto. Besides, how infinitely small was the chance that yonder sentry should prove to be the man he was in search of!

Presently little Augustin came trotting down the street, entered the ale-house to restore the empty dish, and then returned slowly past the stranger. The latter accosted him. At first the boy was shy, and would not speak; but by degrees he was drawn on to talk of the "Preusse" up aloft there,—and of the wonderful daws that haunted the belfry-steeple. "The Preusse isn't wicked," said the child, looking up wistfully into the stranger's face. "He showed me the daws' nests. The folk here think he's wicked because he

will have dinner every day," pursued little Augustin, imputing what he supposed to be the true motive for the hostility which this sentry had excited. "But it ain't wicked to have dinner every day, if you can get it. The Herr Bürgermeister has dinner and supper too."

"Do you know what this soldier's name is, Kleiner?"

"Nay; I call him 'Preusse.'"

"Has he blue eyes?"

"Yes; and a blue coat," responded Augustin innocently.

"Does he talk like you and the rest here?"

"Ach!" cried the child grinning, "he speaks so funny. Not like us. But he comes from a long way off. He's a woodsman; and he tells me tales of the forests and the beasts there. But I darn't stay with him very long;—only while he eats his dinner. But he would fain I stayed. 'Tis right lonesome up there;—ja, right lonesome!"

When Augustin next ascended the belfry to carry a bowl of milk and a slice of bread to the troublesome bird that the Goldenauers had caged in an evil hour, the child had concealed under his little patched coat a scrap of paper with these words scrawled on it,—“If you are whom I take you for, write your name on this, and give it to the boy. I am a friend, by this token of two women that were dear to you, Lotte and Liese.”

“J. M.”

When Otto beheld this unexpected writing, which seemed to have fallen from the skies, he became much agitated. The writer could be no other than Joachim Müller. What had brought him hither? A thousand anxious thoughts chased each other through his mind; a thousand apprehensions that some evil had befallen his Lieschen; and these made his solitary imprisonment intolerably irksome. He had neither pen nor pencil, but he pricked the word “Otto” on the paper with a pin discovered in Augustin's garments, and bade the child lose no time in delivering that secretly to the strange man who had accosted him.

The little fellow was proud of his trust, and promised to fulfil it faithfully. When the child had disappeared down the winding-stair, Otto's excitement rose to fever heat. He had half a mind, if speedy rescue did not arrive, to make a rush for it, and sallying forth from the postern-door when it should be opened to admit Augustin, try to regain his liberty by a coup-de-main. He wished to be faithful to his post, and to do his duty, but was he to remain there for ever? His comrades had abandoned him. His officers had forgotten him. And then Lieschen might be in peril or suffering! Oh, if he knew! If he only could know! And then he paced furiously up and down his narrow platform until he was fain to cease for very weariness. Meanwhile Augustin's second attempt at negotiation did not fare so well as his first. Suspicion had been aroused. The child was watched, and just as he was about to deliver up to the stranger the scrap of paper entrusted to him, both himself and Joachim were

seized by a posse of ardent Goldenauers, and haled to the presence of the burgomaster. Here was a turn of the wheel! If the obdurate sentry on the belfry continued to defy them, at least they held his friend as hostage. In vain Joachim protested that his business with the soldier was utterly unconnected with things political and warlike. All that mattered little. The main thing was that they,—the Goldenauers,—had it now in their power to threaten reprisals in case the sentry should do any of their people any injury. They were elated with the assurance that the obdurate sentry must speedily yield, and with the proud thought that instead of one prisoner, they would now have two.

These pleasing anticipations, however, were interrupted by one who burst into the burgomaster's sitting-room,—where Joachim and the child Augustin were still standing amidst a noisy crowd of citizens,—and announced the terrifying intelligence that the Prussians were coming back. A shepherd had seen the detachment, accompanied by some reinforcements, in full march along the high road to Goldenau. The miller, with politic sagacity, had already despatched a messenger to meet the returning heroes, and to offer their commanding officer any accommodation his house afforded. For it was as well to be on the safe side if, as appeared too certain, these blue-coated fellows were getting the upper hand everywhere.

The group of Goldenauers, but now so voluble and eager, were stricken with silence, and melted away with marvellous rapidity. Only the poor stout burgomaster remained sitting, panic-struck and amazed, in his chair; pondering helplessly what manner of vengeance would overtake him for his conduct to the sentry, and feeling well-convinced that if a scape-goat were needed for the sins of the community, his fellow-citizens would not hesitate to give him up for punishment. But the poor man was alarming himself needlessly. Punishment,—at least punishment of any very terrible kind,—was not destined to fall to his lot. Rumour indeed whispered somewhat of sundry exactions levied on the wealthier inhabitants of Goldenau; exactions from which the rich miller's policy and politeness by no means exempted him. But of these, this history having no trustworthy authority to go upon, says nothing. The Prussians had no time for entering into particular inquiries as to who had been principally concerned in the attempt to imprison their sentry, and probably no inclination to do so either.

When Otto descended from his airy station and appeared on the Platz, his comrades there assembled greeted him with a hearty ringing "hurrah!" And his captain said a few kind words applauding his fidelity and endurance. That was all. The explanation of his having been abandoned was simply that in the hurry of an unexpected summons he had been forgotten. An outpost stationed nearer to Zittau had received warning of an intended attack by a party of

Austrian cavalry sent across the Bohemian frontier. Their commander had sent for assistance to the nearest Prussian detachment. The contemplated attack had not taken place, however, and Otto's regiment was now in full march southward to join the main body of Prince Frederick Charles's army corps. They were to remain but one night in Goldenau. That one night, however, was sufficient for Otto to learn from his cousin Joachim all the strange story respecting Lieschen which had come to light during his absence.

"God bless her true heart!" cried the lover, when Joachim related how Liese had spoken of him, and how it was her intense longing to let him know what had happened, and to hear from him, that had induced the charcoal-burner to set off in search of him. "And thanks to you, Cousin Joachim," added Otto, grasping Joachim's hand. "It was a true, friendly,—nay, more than friendly act to make that journey to find me. There was some risk in it too. This part of the country is not pleasant to travel in just at this moment. And so my little Lieschen is a *Fräulein*? She could be neither dearer nor better in my eyes than she is,—not if she turned out to have the longest pedigree that ever was written. But it is for me to consider whether I should do right to hold her to her promise now that all is so changed. Think what I am, Cousin Joachim! A disinherited, penniless fellow that can find nothing better to do than to give his body to be shot at in exchange for meat and drink! A fine match for an heiress!"

"That sounds all very fine," responded Joachim, "and I can't pretend to argue with you, but I know this, as sure as I know the sun's in heaven;—if you talk of giving her up, you'll break her heart."

"I won't break her heart if I can help it," answered Otto. "And since she,—the sweet, innocent-hearted darling!—would have married me when she thought I was above her, as the world reckons, I'm not clear in my own mind that it wouldn't be mean in me to say 'No; now I won't marry you because the places are changed, and you have the thalers, and I have nothing.'"

"I can't argue about it," repeated Joachim. "I only know you'll break her heart if you give her up. She has her mother's nature, and her mother died broken-hearted, if ever woman did."

"But sieh'mal, Joachim! I am bound hard and fast. I must serve my time. Not that I grumble. Fighting is not the trade I'd prefer, but I do believe I'm on the right side for Fatherland. And then when you get among a lot of comrades, and hear day by day, and hour by hour, how the war is going, you can't help feeling strongly about it. All the same, I'd give more than I can tell to be able to go home even for an hour, and see my darling, and say a word to my uncle. I often think of the old man, Joachim; and I

think of him without a spark of anger. Why, if there was nothing else, I should feel kindly towards him for his goodness to my Lieschen. He has a soft place in his heart, has Uncle Schnarcher. Look ye, cousin; they say there's a great battle toward, and we are to press on to join the main body of the army in Bohemia. Now, I—I—. Well, a bullet may find me as well as another, and if the worst happens, I charge you to give a message to Uncle Schnarcher. As to my Lieschen, she knows,—she knows that as long as my heart beats, I love her with all my strength. My last thought in all the world would be of her, if I knew I was dying. But the poor old man would be lonely, and perhaps he might feel some regret,—some self-reproach. You tell him, Joachim, from me, that I know now I was hasty and stubborn. Not altogether wrong, I believe, but rash. And tell him, too, that I thanked him for his care of the orphan boy, and that I humbly and sincerely asked his pardon for aught I have ever said or done to grieve him."

Joachim responded by a silent grasp of the hand, and there was no more said between them. For early in the morning the Prussians must be in motion southward from Goldenau, and let grief, or love, or joy reign as they will, sleep will always exact his tribute-dues from frail mortality.

In the meanwhile things were not standing still in distant Lippe-Detmold. Major von Groll had, of course, no intention of leaving his niece in the sacristan's cottage at Horn. He had been occupying himself very earnestly with plans for the disposal of the young lady. If Amalia would have received her kindly, all would have been smooth. But the "gnädige Frau" was still too furious at the loss of her inheritance to listen to such a proposition for an instant. If Ferdinand enjoyed ruin and disgrace,—as it appeared he did, for he had taken vast pains to find them,—she did not. Don't let them bring the little wretch near her! That was all. Major von Groll could of course have exerted his marital authority so far as to insist that his wife should receive her niece into her house. But what exertion of marital authority would avail to prevent Amalia from rendering the girl's life a burden to her under those circumstances? Still it was clear that in any case Fräulein Dornberg could not be left in her present quarters.

Casting about in his mind for some help, a chance word recalled to his mind the great interest which Fräulein Bopp had appeared to take in Liese. Fräulein Bopp had not been seen at the Von Grolls' since the evening on which she had opened the morocco case, and ingenuously proclaimed the extraordinary resemblance between the portrait it contained, and Frau von Schleppers' pretty servant-maid. The poor spinster had put herself for ever beyond the pale of Frau von Groll's grace. Frau von Groll spoke of her as "that Bopp,"

and pronounced her to be the most impertinently meddlesome old maid in Germany.

The Major called on Fräulein Bopp without loss of time, and a very few words sufficed to settle that Liese should share the Fräulein's modest lodgings until some permanent arrangement could be made for her. Fräulein Bopp was overjoyed at the idea. The romance of Lieschen's story had entranced her. She was even sorry that her slender means rendered it necessary for her to accept the payment for bed and board which the Major offered as delicately as he could. It would have delighted Fräulein Bopp to receive the orphan girl as her guest, and to treat her,—as with some pardonable obliviousness of chronology she told herself,—like a sister. But stern fate, and the small quantity of coffee and butter-brod that could be purchased for a groschen, prevented this.

However, the Major was only too glad to have found a safe and unexceptionably respectable asylum for Liese, until either this deplorable war should cease, and he could take her to Saxony, and place her in the care of a distant relative of her father's, an old chanoinesse who resided at Dornberg; or until time and his own influence should so far have softened his Amalia as to allow her to receive the orphan girl with kindness.

So the Major went to Horn, and proceeded to the sacristan's cottage, to inform his niece that she must return with him the next morning to Detmold. It was a sultry afternoon. The sun had been blazing all day out of a cloudless sky. The air was quite still, and the thirsty flowers in the sacristan's garden hung their heads languidly. The sweet herbs sent up a dry strong spicy smell. Nothing seemed to be moving but a brown velvet-coated bee that had gorged himself with luscious juices and was sleepily buzzing over a bed of flowering thyme, and a pair of fluttering white butterflies. Doors and windows were open in the cottage, and Von Groll could hear the tones of the sacristan's voice reading a chapter in the Bible. The Major stopped reverently, unwilling to interrupt the evening devotions of the little household.

When the chapter ceased there was a low murmur of prayer. The sacristan prayed in short broken sentences for a blessing on all beneath that roof-tree; and then in a still feebler tone, that the Lord would be pleased to protect all loved ones who were absent, and who might be exposed to any peculiar peril. And the two women responded "Amen!" Then Liese's sweet small voice clove the summer air with a silver sound. She sang the hymn, "*Breit aus die Flügel beide*,"—"Spread out thy wings,"—which turns on the beautiful Scripture simile of the Lord sheltering his children, as a hen gathers her chickens beneath her wings. Here and there Sophie put in a quavering note in her trembling old voice; and the Major stood bareheaded in the sun-



shine, and listened until the hymn was done. And whilst he listened and the notes of the hymn came floating out into the peaceful old-fashioned garden,—at that very moment the great guns were thundering over Sadowa, and the air was thick and stifling with their deadly breath; and the victorious Prussians, who had been engaged in mortal conflict since eight o'clock in the morning, were pursuing the remnants of the Austrian army, now in full retreat from the fatal field.

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## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### CONCLUSION.

ON the 3rd of July, 1866, was fought the battle of Sadowa, or Königgrätz; and though several engagements of minor importance took place subsequently to that great victory, it may fairly be said that the voice of the cannon at Sadowa boomed out an assurance of speedy peace to Europe. For although the formal treaty of peace between Austria and Prussia was not signed at Prague until the 23rd of the following August, the preliminary treaty was concluded at Nikolsburg on the 26th of July; and as early as the 22nd, a five-days' armistice between the two great belligerent powers had been agreed upon.

It is needless to dwell on the profound emotions awakened by the news of that memorable battle of the 3rd of July throughout the length and breadth of Germany. As the tidings spread, growing clearer and more positive day by day, even those most unwilling to admit the truth, were compelled to own that now there could be no longer any doubt as to which side fortune favoured in this great struggle. Those who rejoiced in the result of the bloody day of Sadowa protested that, not blind Fortune, but keen-sighted sagacity and matchless armaments had determined the victory. Turn we to the narrow circle of persons whose acquaintance we have made in the little principality of Lippe-Detmold, and who are soon about to say "farewell" to the courteous reader.

Throughout the small territory the greatest excitement prevailed, and news was eagerly sought for. Our friends at the Pied Lamb, at Horn, wagged their heads wonderingly at the news. The horse-faced man,—always sparing of speech,—became absolutely speechless; but was impressive in his speechlessness by means of an extraordinary power which he developed of conveying an intensely concentrated meaning into his nod. He shut his eyes very tight; fixed his pipe firmly between his teeth; and then tossed his head up and down many times in succession, with a thoroughly equine movement. The impression made by this gesture on his friends was no



whit diminished by their having not the slightest idea what it was he meant them to understand by it.

Herr Quendel took his stand on the broad principles of trade. Prussian or Austrian, all men must drink; ay, and excepting some few benighted persons not worth mentioning, all men must smoke. Why then dispute and argue? The war would speedily come to an end. So he was told. Hitherto, things had gone pretty smoothly in Horn, in spite of the fighting. He was of opinion that if each man would mind his own business, and ignore the business of his neighbour, the world would go well. But if any gentleman present differed from him he was at liberty to call for, and add to his score, a bumper of the best wine that his, Quendel's, cellar afforded, and drink to his own particular opinions. A handsome and liberal-minded offer was this, which no citizen of Horn had the spirit to accept. In these days Herr Peters rose to the very apex of social distinction. The good people of Horn were,—to parody Napoleon's somewhat irreverent dictum that Providence is always on the side of the great battalions,—unanimously on the side of the winning army. Success was worshipped with very naïve sincerity in Horn. But then Horn is a small, insignificant, benighted place; by no means like,—like,—in short, by no means like any of those numerous highly-civilised and well-known communities in which success, irrespective of desert, is not worshipped at all.

The company at the Speise-Saal of the Pied Lamb was deprived of its chief member in the person of the venerable sacristan of St. Mary's, who had deserted it for some weeks. But perhaps, all things considered, this was not altogether to be regretted. For Simon Schnarcher was, to do him justice, no success-worshipper. He clung to his old notions with loyal tenacity; and it was observable that Herr Peters formerly so argumentative in his mild way on the subject of politics, would now endure to hear the sacristan put forth the most retrograde and anti-liberal doctrines without uttering a word of protest. At least he did so until old Sophie, cunning-simple in her love for her old master, said to him one day, "Ach bitte, Herr Peters! do ye now contradict the Herr Küster now and then. He's been used to get the better of folks in argument all his days, has the Herr Küster; and how can he do it if nobody won't argue against him? And I'm sure he needs something to raise his spirits, and us all in such trouble with not knowing what has become of our poor dear boy in all their murdering battles!" And poor, faithful Sophie put her apron to her eyes. After which hint the kindly Herr Peters made a point of "being got the better of in argument" by his old friend. It was lonely and sad enough at this time in the sacristan's cottage; for Lieschen, who had brightened it like a ray of sunshine, was gone. Her grand, high-born uncle had taken her away to Detmold.

Before leaving Horn, Lieschen had dutifully gone up to the farm to pay her greeting to Cousin Hanne. She had not visited the Hausfrau since entering Schnarcher's service. But under her changed circumstances, the girl's natural delicacy of feeling prompted her to omit no mark of respect to her mother's relatives. She had gone, then, to the farm; and Hanne had received her in a half-kind, half-cool manner. She had said, well,—she supposed Liese would be contented now, at any rate!—As though the girl had long been fretfully hankering after the honour of being proved to be a baron's daughter, and had achieved it at last.—And she added that it might turn out for good, or it might not; but that one comfort was, she, Hanne, now washed her hands of all responsibility in the matter;—a species of ablution which, it appeared to most people, Providence had already seen fit to render entirely superfluous.

Liese was consigned to the care of Fräulein Bopp; and the latter lady was strictly cautioned by the Major not to encourage his niece in any foolish love-lorn fancies, having reference to a certain Otto Hemmerich,—a good young fellow in his way, said the Major, and one who had not been altogether well treated in Detmold, considering his father's long and faithful services to the Prince as Head-ranger, but one with whom it was out of the question for Fräulein Elisabeth Dornberg to think of forming an alliance. For Lieschen had summoned courage to tell Major von Groll,—whom she found insurmountable difficulty in addressing as “uncle,”—that she was Otto Hemmerich's betrothed, that she loved nobody but him, and that, come what might, she was resolved to be true to him, and to marry him if he remained true to her, and if,—if,—ach Gott! if he came back safe from the wars.

It is to be feared that Fräulein Bopp, although honestly desirous to do her duty, was not altogether the strictest and sternest duenna that could have been selected under the circumstances. For the soft-hearted lady could not but sympathise with the lover's romantic story, and was more apt to weep with Liese than to scold her, or to lecture her about the dignity of her position.

The time that Liese passed in Fräulein Bopp's tiny lodging in Detmold was a period, at first, of profound depression, and, later, of harrowing and still increasing anxiety. Rumours of great battles seemed to darken the very air, like birds of ill omen. Night and day the dread haunted her heart,—and, alas, how many other loving hearts in Germany!—that at that hour, at that moment, her own love, her husband, might be writhing in pain and fever, or stretched stark and stiff on the cold earth. Oh, it was dreadful! too terrible to be true! Many a night did the poor child start from uneasy slumbers in her own little bed, and, rushing to her gentle-natured hostess, throw herself trembling into the good woman's arms, and

cry out that he was dead, dead, dead,—her Otto, killed, murdered, with a cruel bullet in his breast! And the pitiful Fräulein would forget all about Liese's ancestors, and would soothe and comfort her, and bid her hope, until the girl sobbed herself to sleep again by her side. Then came the news of Sadowa; and still no tidings of Otto, no tidings of Joachim! Liese, in the pain of her gnawing anxiety, was unjust to the poor charcoal-burner. Why could he not have written, at least? Why not have sent a word? He must have found Otto,—he must! Oh, she would have found him if she could have been let to go and seek him! But Joachim did not love him. Nobody loved him, except her,—nobody! They were all cruel and hard-hearted, and had driven him away. And then, the next moment, she would pray to be forgiven those harsh, unjust words, and moan out that sorrow was making her wicked, and that when Otto came back he would not be able to love her any more. So passed away the time until the end of the month, and then it was known that peace was as good as settled. But still neither of Otto nor his cousin did any news reach Detmold.

One evening Lieschen was sitting alone in Fräulein Bopp's little drawing-room, the good spinster herself being engaged in superintending the preparation of the supper, in conjunction with her old waiting-maid. Lieschen had some knitting in her fingers, but she was not even feigning to work. There she sat, idly staring out of the window at the sky, now beginning to be stained with red sunset colours. Presently, Fräulein Bopp opened the door, and stood quite still, looking at the girl. Lieschen neither spoke nor stirred. "Elisabeth!" said Fräulein Bopp at last; and a tremor in her voice seemed suddenly to communicate itself to Lieschen's frame. Her hands shook, and the work dropped from them. "My dear Elisabeth, listen to me quietly. Joachim Müller——"

"Is he here?" gasped out Lieschen, quite hoarsely. She tried to stand up, but could not.

"Yes, my dear, darling Elisabeth, he is here; and,—listen, dear child,—he,—he brings good news. He has seen his cousin, Otto Hemmerich, and——."

With a shrill, piercing cry, that rang through the little house, and that sounded in Fräulein Bopp's ears whenever she thought of the scene afterwards all her life long, Liese sprang towards the door. She no longer trembled; she was no longer weak; she gave a great, strong bound, that carried her across the room, and calling out, "Otto! Otto! Otto!" fell into her lover's arms, and was pressed to his throbbing heart.

I must briefly explain by what means Otto was thus enabled to return to Detmold, and then my story will be nearly told. The narrative of his feat of sustaining a siege single-handed on the

belfry of Goldenau had reached the ears of high and mighty personages,—chiefs, glorious in war and illustrious in their social greatness. After the day of Sadowa,—in which Otto, though in the thick of the fight, escaped quite scatheless,—he was sent for to appear in a princely presence, and interrogated as to the particulars of his exploit at Goldenau. Otto told his story with manfulness and modesty, and evidently made a favourable impression on his illustrious hearers. He was promised promotion and rewards, but an expression in his face called forth the inquiry whether he were dissatisfied with what was to be done for him.

Dissatisfied! Ach behüte! How could he be dissatisfied? It would be a generous acknowledgment for much greater deeds than his; for, after all, those villagers were not over brave. A couple of resolute men might have taken him. No; far from dissatisfied; but,—if he might choose——.

Let him speak freely.

Well, then, he had enlisted as a regular soldier. In the ordinary course of things he must of course serve out his time. But as it seemed now that the enemy had had pretty nearly enough of it,—not but what he thought his Austrian fellow-countrymen had fought grandly,—and peace would most likely not be long in coming, and as he had weighty and urgent reasons for wishing to be back in his own home again, the boon he would crave, since they condescended kindly to ask him, would be that on the conclusion of the war he should be discharged from further service and allowed to return to Detmold. “And,” said Otto, in conclusion, with a naïve earnestness that raised a good-humoured smile on every face around, “if you set me free now, you’ll not lose a soldier; for I give my word as an honest man and a true German, that whenever the black and white flag flies again for Fatherland, I’ll come and fight under it as long as my arm can carry a rifle.”

Without binding him by any such promise, however, Otto’s request was granted. A shrewd old general, very near the person of Majesty, remarked that a few such young fellows scattered through the land would do much for the Prussian greatness and prosperity. “We soldiers win Sadowas,” said the general, “but ’tis your citizen fellows must make them worth the winning.”

Of Liese’s joy and thankfulness, Otto’s rapture at being with her once more, and Fräulein Bopp’s sympathetic friendship, I need say nothing. Fräulein Bopp,—I am compelled in my character of faithful chronicler to confess,—deserted from the Major’s colours, and went over, bag and baggage, to the enemy. Such a pair of lovers must not, could not, should not be separated!

Otto’s reception at Horn was quite festal. There was one solemn scene in the sacristan’s cottage when the young man knelt at his

uncle's feet and begged him to take off the ban he had laid upon him in his wrath; and old Simon Schnarcher raised his withered hands above his nephew's head, and prayed aloud, saying:—"Oh, merciful Lord and Father, forgive, I beseech thee, in thy loving clemency, the rash and wicked words that fell from thy servant's lips. Thou, Lord, who readest all hearts, knowest that even when I spoke them the boy was dear and precious to me. Bless him, oh, Father! and bless also the pure woman whom he loves. And forgive,—forgive us,—our trespasses, Lord,—as we,—forgive—" And then the aged man wept aloud and fell on Otto's breast. And those tears were the sweetest and most blessed that Simon Schnarcher's eyes had shed for the space of a long lifetime,—ever since he had wept over his mother's dead face.

But all the other incidents of Otto's return to Horn were joyous, not to say comic, in their character. Public opinion already held him very high, from the moment in which a local paper reprinted a paragraph that had gone the round of the Prussian journals, and which was headed, "Brave resistance of a Prussian sentry. A whole population kept at bay by one man!" For it was known that Otto was the hero in question. But what was this to the excitement that prevailed when one day a letter, sealed with an enormous coat-of-arms, and bearing evidence of its magnificently, and, indeed, unspeakably, illustrious origin, arrived addressed to Otto, and informed him that his Highness the Prince of Detmold had heard with great pleasure, from a very exalted personage, of the gallant conduct of one of his subjects in an incident of the late war, and having made particular inquiries as to the name and history of the Detmolder who had thus distinguished himself, his Highness had confided to his private secretary,—the writer of the letter,—the pleasing task of informing Herr Otto Hemmerich that he was thenceforth to consider himself installed in the post of Head-ranger of the Detmold woods and forests, as held by his late father; whose services the Prince held in cordial and grateful remembrance.

It was superb. Horn felt that it had played a part,—and no insignificant part either,—in the great campaign of 1866. To Otto, the kind words about his father seemed the most precious in all the letter. After a confidential colloquy with Liese, Otto lost no time in seeking Major von Groll and laying his prospects before that gentleman. Otto had a plan to propose which appeared to him to combine a great many advantages, and to which he begged the Major to give his best consideration. The plan was simply this. That the Von Grolls should reside on the Dornberg estates in Saxony, and possess them during their lives. After their decease, the property would of course revert to Liese. Otto felt that some acknowledgment was due to Von Groll for his disinterested and

honourable conduct, and he added that neither Liese nor himself desired to deprive the "gnädige Frau," his wife, of the joys of that inheritance on which she had so evidently set her heart.

The Major demurred. But Amalia, who had got an inkling of the proposition, gave him no peace until he consented. "Tis the least the hussy can do for us," said Amalia Wilhelmina, geboren Dornberg. So Liese and Otto took possession of the old hunting-lodge, which once more shone with the ruddy fire-light of home, and echoed to the sweet sounds of home voices.

The Major could not quite reconcile himself to his niece's marriage. But, as he said, Liese's insensibility to the claims of rank was doubtless in her blood; one of the sad consequences of her father's deplorable mésalliance. Once a year the Major has promised to come and enjoy his favourite pastime of hunting in the Detmold woods; and, up to the time of this present writing, he has done so, each year being the guest of Head-ranger Otto Hemmerich.

When Major von Groll went away into Saxony, at the conclusion of the war, the post of land-steward remained vacant for a time. But, to everybody's great surprise, the Justizrath von Schleppers did not get it. It was bestowed on a stranger, who conducted the business of his office with hard, dry impartiality; and who examined the Justizrath's accounts in an uncomfortably microscopic manner. But Von Schleppers was never heard to utter a word of complaint. And people would tell you it was plain how hardly the poor Justizrath had been used, since every soul who knew him got an impression,—they couldn't say how,—that he had been sacrificed owing to his too open and confiding cast of mind. And he never, never complained!

Frau Mathilde occasionally makes little visits to the hunting-lodge, and appears thoroughly to enjoy instructing young Frau Hemmerich in various housewifely and matronly duties. She is magnificently patronizing on all such occasions. But as neither Otto nor Lieschen in the least resent this, and as they have really a kindly feeling towards Liese's old mistress, all goes smoothly; only they sometimes indulge in a little banter about the famous pink satin note-paper, which banter, although Frau Mathilde secretly fears it is scarcely respectful, she yet takes in good part.

Fräulein Bopp is the cherished friend of all at the hunting-lodge; and when, last winter, a little red-faced boy appeared in the Hemmerichs' family circle, the Fräulein displayed so remarkable a talent for amusing and playing with that pulpy young tyrant as surprised even those who knew her most intimately. When last I had news from Horn, Herr Quandel was gathered to his fathers. The rest of the habitués of the Spiese-Saal survived; but the house was shorn of its ancient glories, and no such meetings as I have chronicled took place in it any more.

Joachim Müller had the run of Otto's home. But he never was quite cured of his solitary, shy ways. Sometimes he would be absent whole weeks in the woods. And one day, within a year of Otto's marriage, the poor charcoal-burner was found dead beneath a spreading oak tree. He seemed to have died quite quietly; but they found something clenched in his hand, and, opening the dead fingers, found them to contain a long tress of Lieschen's brown hair, which old Sophie confessed to having cut off for him.

"Poor creature!" said Sophie; "I do believe that he sometimes wasn't quite right in his head. That brain-fever he had, never was quite cured, to my thinking; and, at times, I'll swear he fancied Lieschen was her poor mother come to life again! Lord be gracious to him! There's worse folks on God's earth than poor Joachim!"

Simon Schnarcher removed to his nephew's house, and was of course accompanied by the faithful Sophie. His cottage and bit of garden land in Horn are at present rented by Herr Peters, who has retired from business. But Simon destines them, as well as whatever money he has saved, to come to the pulpy young tyrant aforesaid. The old man is considerably upwards of eighty; but,—excepting an occasional attack of his old foe, the rheumatism,—continues to be wonderfully well and strong. And as he is most dutifully considered and respected by Otto and Lieschen, and all their dependants, he does not feel that he has ceased to be "master." When the autumn twilight is long, and the leaves begin to fall, and a red glow from the broad hearth shines blithely out into the black shadow of the forest, there are few places more inviting than the hospitable kitchen of the old hunting-lodge, and few families more cheerfully contented than the "Sacristan's Household."

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## THE IRISH CHURCH DEBATE.

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Just about the time that this article appears in print, the Irish Church Bill will make its appearance before the House of Lords. It would be idle, therefore, for us to indulge in speculations as to the reception it may meet with there, or the modifications it may be subjected to before it receives the Royal sanction, and becomes thereby the law of the land. Yet we are fully justified in writing concerning disestablishment and disendowment as if they were accomplished facts. It is possible, though barely probable, that the Government measure may make shipwreck in the Upper House; but even if it should get stranded for a time, its passage in the immediate future is matter of absolute certainty. A political revolution would be required, before a Bill, whose principle has been sanctioned by a direct appeal to the nation and which has been carried through the House of Commons by overwhelming majorities, could be permanently resisted by our hereditary Legislature; and if such a revolution could ever be accomplished, it would be upon a far different issue from any now before Parliament. Even the most credulous of Conservatives derives no hope at the present crisis from the old Tory cry, "Thank God, we have a House of Lords;" and for all practical purposes the Irish Church controversy may be considered as settled from the day when the Bill was ordered to be reported, amidst the cheers of the Commons.

In taking stock, then, of the political contest through which we have just passed, we may in the first instance congratulate the liberal party on the brilliant success which has attended the tactics of their leaders. In one sense, the resolution to deal with the Irish Church question was undoubtedly a party move, but the outcry which has been raised against the Bill on this account has always seemed to us dishonest or foolish. The critics who are so fond of dilating upon the hurtfulness of government by party, overlook the fact that what they really object to is popular self-government. Now, there is no doubt that much might be urged against the system of deciding intricate controversies by the rough test of numerical majorities; but so long as you allow the popular will to be supreme,—as you must under all free institutions,—that will must be determined by the majority, and if majorities are to rule, the object of every statesman and every party must be to secure a majority. "*Qui veut le fin veut les moyens*;" and if you have at heart the attainment of certain reforms, you must



also wish for the means by which alone these reforms can be effected. Under a parliamentary régime, you might as well try to govern without party spirit as to drive a steam-engine without steam; and to say that when Mr. Gladstone resolved to introduce his famous resolutions, he took into account their probable effect on the fortunes of his party, is only to say that he is the minister of a free Parliament, not of a benevolent despotism. Eighteen months ago, when this question of the Irish Church was first brought before the public, the condition of the liberal party was eminently unsatisfactory. Possessing a considerable nominal majority in the House of Commons, it was unable to retain office, and unwilling to initiate any policy of its own. Internal dissensions had paralysed its strength, and a controversy was openly waged, as to whether the leaders were unable to lead, or the rank and file were determined not to be led. It is needless to recall the exceptional circumstances which had produced this disorganisation of the party. It is enough to state, that if no definite policy could have been agreed upon, the Conservatives would have remained in office, and would have materially reduced their minority at the late elections, even if they had not converted that minority into an absolute majority. A party pledged to reform in the abstract has no reason of existence, if it has no particular reform to carry out; and the reforming majority elected under the Palmerstonian régime had no wish save to keep things as they were. Under these circumstances Mr. Gladstone had no option except to pledge his supporters to the achievement of a certain end; and his selection of the position he proposed to invest in the approaching campaign seems to us to indicate high strategical ability. After a battle has been fought and won the system on which it was fought out commends itself at once to the approval of critics; but it is only fair to remember that before the engagement commenced a variety of formidable objections were urged against the tactics about to be pursued. It was necessary that the liberal party should appeal to the country with a distinct programme, and it was necessary also that that programme should be of a kind to conciliate, or at any rate not to alienate, the good-will of the electoral body. Now the one argument which appealed strongly to popular feeling in favour of immediate action concerning the Irish Church question lay in the patent fact that something must be done for Ireland; and that, barring the disestablishment of the Anglican Church, it was difficult, if not impossible, to say what there was that could be done at once for Ireland. On the other hand, the grievance proposed to be removed was not one which pressed in any way on English or Scotch constituencies. The proposal to place the Anglican and the Catholic communions on a footing of equality in the sister kingdom was certain beforehand to encounter the determined opposition of the English clergy; and there was much reason to apprehend that it would excite the old

"No Popery" passions, which have long played so great a part in our political contests. When the programme of the Opposition was first made public the Conservatives thought their triumph was secure; and Mr. Disraeli, with that cynical audacity of his, which would be sublime if it were not also so discreditable to the country, put himself forward, in the famous Maunday Thursday letter, as the champion of Protestantism, pure and undefiled, against the insidious conspiracy of Romanists, Ritualists, and Rationalists. The result proved that Mr. Gladstone had estimated the conditions of the conflict more accurately than his brilliant and unscrupulous opponent. No popular enthusiasm was created by the resolution to do justice to Ireland in the matter of the Establishment; indeed, to quote the opinion of a politician well qualified to judge upon the matter, "the utmost that can be said concerning the particular cry adopted by the liberal leaders was that it did not injure the prospects of the party at the hustings;" but the good sense and right feeling of the country rejected the appeal made to sectarian animosities; and the constituencies which now, as always within the last forty years, are staunchly liberal at heart, rallied to the support of leaders who were prepared to carry out their principles into practice. At the commencement of the session of 1869 we wrote as follows in these pages:—"It is possible that the enunciation of a clear and distinct programme may detach from the Liberals a certain amount of half-hearted support, given to them on the tacit understanding that they are not to carry out their principles into execution. But we are convinced that any loss of this kind will be more than counterbalanced by the sympathy which a policy of action will call forth throughout the country." So the event proved. From the time that Mr. Gladstone introduced his resolutions the liberal party recovered its supremacy; and, on an appeal being made to the constituencies, the country, by a majority of some hundred and ten votes, endorsed the policy on which these resolutions were founded.

Thus within six months from the commencement of the campaign the statesman whom Mr. Bouverie had described not long before as "a leader without followers," found himself placed in power at the head of one of the largest majorities which has ever supported an English Premier. And this majority was not only numerically strong, but it was also united to an unprecedented degree. The first House of Commons elected by household borough suffrage may have disappointed in many ways the expectations of those who advocated a wide extension of the franchise, but it has assuredly proved free from any taint of Adullamy. Most of the members who had taken part in the liberal secession paid with the cost of their seats for their disloyalty to party discipline, while the few who survived the contest learnt by the example of their fellows that to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds is not permitted to the representatives of independent constituencies. As a matter of fact the Liberals of the new Parliament

have adhered to Mr. Gladstone with an unswerving fidelity; and, as yet, there has not even been a murmur of any fresh secession from the ministerial ranks. Owing to this fact the various clauses of the Government measure have been uniformly carried by majorities varying from ninety-five to one hundred and twenty. On the day when Mr. Disraeli brought forward his amendments, a liberal member of very independent politics was asked if he had read them. "No," was the answer. "What is the good, as whether I agree with the amendments or not, I must vote against them all." The remark was made half in jest, but it conveyed the noteworthy truth that for a liberal member there was little possibility of any private judgment as to the merits or demerits of each particular item of the ministerial measure. The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill, had to be voted, and there was no practical option between opposing the Government scheme in its entirety, or rejecting it altogether. This unity of action was ensured not only by the distinctness with which the country had declared that Mr. Gladstone was to be supported "*quand même*," but by the skill with which the project for the disestablishment and disendowment of the Irish Church was brought before Parliament as a complete and harmonious whole. Many even of the most sincere supporters both of the Ministry and the measure doubted beforehand whether it was advisable to embarrass the proposal for the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and the sequestration of its property, with any provisions as to the future organisation of the disestablished Church, and the employment of the surplus funds left after all vested interests had been indemnified. Nor, we confess, are we still altogether convinced that the elaborateness with which every possible contingency has been provided for by the Bill may not lead hereafter to embarrassments, the responsibility of which it will be equally hard for the State either to accept or reject. For the present, however, the success of the scheme has been secured by the extent to which it embraces every branch of the question. How disestablishment is to be carried out; how the disestablished Church is to reorganise itself into a voluntary communion; how the property to be taken from the Establishment is to be redistributed, are matters all provided for with the utmost care and ingenuity; and the extraordinary talent of organisation possessed by the Premier has seldom, if ever, been shown to greater advantage than in the elaborate scheme which he has drawn out for the purpose of carrying his resolutions into effect. Exceptions may be taken with justice to several portions of the measure; and to these exceptions we shall refer presently. But any candid observer must admit that if the Irish Church is to be disestablished and disendowed at all, it would be difficult to find any substantial fault with the method by which this end is to be attained; and, therefore, it was evident that determined opposition to any part of the measure meant in reality opposition to the principle of the

Bill. Had it been otherwise, this conclusion would not have been equally obvious. If the future of the Anglican communion had been left entirely undetermined, or if the disposition of the residue of its property had been postponed till the real amount was ascertained, there would have been room for opposition none the less formidable from the fact of its coming from a friendly quarter. This danger has been averted; and in the history of our Parliaments there has probably never been a measure of equal importance which experienced so few modifications between its first introduction and its final passage through the ordeal of Committee.

Something indeed of the good fortune that has hitherto attended the discussion of the Irish Church Bill must fairly be ascribed to the circumstance that its provisions have excited very little general interest in the country. That this should have been the case, is a fact of much more than mere passing importance. Questions that have hitherto roused the keenest controversies in this country were not indirectly connected with the mode in which the ministerial measure is to be carried into effect. The expediency or non-expediency of Establishment, the relations between the State and religious organisations, the rival merits or demerits of antagonistic Churches, and the degree to which abstract truth is to be found in one form of faith more than in another, were all issues involved more or less directly in the solution of the Irish Church problem. Yet, notwithstanding the exciting character of these issues, the public has vouchsafed but a languid attention to the details of the settlement. Some few years ago, during the Palmerstonian era, Mr. Bright, on his return from a tour in the country, where he had been delivering a number of reform speeches, was asked by a friend how he had got on. His answer, if our authority is correct, was,—“I’ve been flogging a dead horse.” After like fashion, the agitators who have laboured hard to rouse the true-blue Protestantism of England have hitherto flogged a dead steed. With the exception of a few unsuccessful demonstrations, and two or three Murphyite riots, there has been no response of any kind to the old “No Popery” rallying cry. It would, we believe, be a blunder to imagine that this apathy arises from any popular reaction towards the doctrine or ceremonial of the Church of Rome. The cardinal tenet of Protestantism,—the right of every man to worship God after his own fashion,—is held even more strongly by the present generation of Englishmen than by any preceding one; but, at the same time, the general tendency of modern speculation has undoubtedly relaxed the hold which particular forms of faith have held hitherto over the minds of our countrymen. A conviction that your own faith is the sole, or at any rate the principal, possessor of divine truth, is essential to any very deep personal enmity to creeds which are other than your own; and, whatever may be the case with dissenting communions, such a conviction is far less prevalent amongst members of

the National Church than it was in bygone days. The old-fashioned orthodox argument that the Protestant Establishment ought to be maintained in Ireland, as a protest in favour of truth against error, has hardly been put forward in any of the discussions which have taken place on the question of disestablishment, either in the press or in Parliament, or even in the pulpit; and yet the theory on which this argument is based is the foundation of the whole "No Popery" cry. Various incidental reasons may be alleged why certain influential classes of Englishmen have abstained from joining in any anti-papal crusade during the present crisis. The Nonconformists, it may be said, disapprove, as a body, of direct connection between Church and State. The Ritualists, though from different reasons, share in that objection for the time being. The Anglican clergy are unwilling to imperil the fortunes of the Establishment in England by identifying them with those of the Irish branch of the National Church. And even zealous Church and State men have had their ardour damped by the flagrant insincerity which distinguished an Orange movement owning Mr. Disraeli as its champion and leader. But when all allowance is made for these various influences, the broad fact still remains, that, whether for good or evil, the religious passions of the English nation can no longer be appealed to with the same certainty of success as in the days when Evangelicalism was at the height of its vigour. Times have changed, and men's thoughts have changed with them; and instead of the staunch, sturdy protest which the Eldons, and Percevals, and Inglises of a former era would have raised against any tampering with the Church which alone taught Bible truth, we have "W. R. G." pleading for the maintenance of the Establishment in the "*Pall Mall Gazette*," on the ground that it protects Latitudinarianism in religion.

It has often been urged, as an objection to Mr. Gladstone as a party leader, that his sympathies with popular feelings and sentiments are of too wide a character. But on the present occasion this very width of sympathy has enabled the liberal leader to gauge English public opinion with an accuracy to which a statesman of equal, but more concentrated ability, could not have attained. To the author of the resolutions is due the credit of having felt that men's minds were ripe for dealing with the Irish Church question, and that the sectarian animosities which had hitherto precluded the possibility of action had lost their intensity. Lord Palmerston would probably have felt no scruple whatever about abolishing the Establishment in Ireland; but, unless we are mistaken, he would have deemed the opposition which such an act was likely to create too formidable to be encountered. Mr. Gladstone, on the contrary, faced the bugbear that has so long prevented liberal statesmen from applying their principles to the case of the Irish Church, and by so doing he secured a most valuable vantage-ground for his party. In saying this it is worth

while to repeat that we have no intention to impute to a simple desire for party success the determination adopted by the liberal leaders to deal with the question of disestablishment. That the Irish Church, as it now exists, is an injustice and abuse has been, for well-nigh forty years, the firm conviction of all thoughtful Liberals; and in acting on this conviction the Liberals are only fulfilling an obvious though hitherto disregarded duty. If it be said that, given this conviction, the leaders of the party are deserving of blame for their long inaction, we must plead the general issue between abstract principles and party politics, to which we have already alluded. To protest, in season and out of season, to assert truths which mankind are not prepared to receive, may be the duty of the reformer. It is not the duty of the party leader. The latter is bound to study, not so much what ought to be the abstract policy of the party he leads, as what is the nearest approximation to that policy which he can hope to recommend with any prospect of success. If our imaginary disputant retorts that statesmanship, under parliamentary institutions, is not then the noblest mission which men can discharge, we are ready to admit the truth of his assertion; but shall assert at the same time that the task of constitutional statesmanship, though not the highest in the world, is nevertheless a high and honourable pursuit. Reformers are the poets of politics, as statesmen are the prose writers. One form of expression may be nobler than the other; but both are noble.

As a display of oratorical eloquence or animated discussion, the debate on the Irish Church Bill will hardly take high rank in our parliamentary annals. With every year the speakers in the House of Commons are learning to address themselves more and more to the great public outside the walls, less and less to the small audience contained within them. And as the outside public had made up its mind on the subject long before the debates commenced,—was indeed already somewhat weary of the subject-matter in dispute,—the orators on either side were chilled by the apathy of their unseen listeners. Then, too, there was a comparative absence of the opposition required to give vitality to a debate. The Conservatives not only had no chance, and knew they had no chance, of introducing any modifications into the Bill not acceptable to the liberal majority, but they were not in the temper which urges men to fight a losing battle to the bitter end. For many months before the repeal of the Corn Laws was carried, the Tories knew that repeal was a matter of certainty; but, notwithstanding, the defeated minority stood to their guns to the last, and the good ship Protection, like the apocryphal Vengeur, foundered with its crew clinging to the hulk, and shrieking defiance as they sunk beneath the waves. But the battle of the Irish Church was fought far otherwise. The champions of the losing cause had no definite plan of action; they could never

make up their minds whether they had better capitulate or risk all upon the fortunes of war; and in consequence they neither resisted firmly nor yielded wisely. The truth is, the Conservatives went to the country with a cry of "No surrender;" and when no response, or rather an unfavourable response, was made to their appeal, they were unable to change their tactics successfully. If, as they had asserted before the election, the disestablishment of the Irish Church and the secularisation of its revenues were acts of spoliation and sacrilege; then it followed logically that no modification in the details of the scheme could deprive it of its nefarious character. When, therefore, Mr. Disraeli introduced his amendments to the Bill at the opening of the session, their adoption by the party involved an implicit acknowledgment either that they had been guilty previously of flagrant exaggeration, or that they were guilty now of an utter dereliction of principle; and the consciousness of this fact damped the ardour of the Opposition. If you claim payment of a disputed debt, and proclaim upon the house-tops that your debtor has obtained your money by fraud and swindling, you debar yourself from taking five shillings in the pound, under pain of being accused of having compounded a felony.

Mr. Disraeli's amendments met with such scanty notice in Parliament that it is not necessary to allude to them in detail. They are, indeed, curious mainly as evidence of the odd incapacity of the late Premier to understand that political legerdemain is not synonymous with statesmanship. The whole object of the disendowment of the Irish Church being to take away its revenues, the conservative leader not only proposed that its funds should be sequestered under one name and given back under another, but he actually appeared to conceive that this compromise would satisfy both the opponents and the advocates of the Irish Church. The moral dishonesty of this proposal was so patent that it met with little support even from the ex-Premier's adherents; and amendments of a more rational kind, which might have been carried under wiser leadership, suffered from the discredit attaching to the baffled attempt to preserve the temporalities of the Establishment by an ingenious artifice. In consequence, the Government Bill has made its way through the House of Commons without any substantial alterations, except those introduced into it by its authors; and the Opposition in the Upper House has not the advantage of being able to support any definite system of modifications on the plea that it has been endorsed and accepted by the conservative party in the popular branch of the legislature.

The Bill, as it now stands, proposes to effect four distinct objects; the severance of all official connection between the State and the Anglican Communion in Ireland; the erection of a body who are to carry on the religious functions of the disestablished Church, and to



inherit certain portions of its property; the sequestration of the revenues of the Church, subject to due provision for life interests; and the distribution of the surplus funds after these interests have been provided for. These appear to us the main objects of the Bill; and the objections which might be urged against it come with more force from a liberal than from a conservative point of view. In framing this remarkable measure, its authors had doubtless two aims before their minds. The first was to produce a Bill which could be carried through Parliament; the second, and more important, was to devise a scheme which would establish religious equality in Ireland. The Irish Church was not an abuse which called for suppression on its own account. On the contrary, as an institution, it worked fairly well; and if it did not do much direct good, it certainly did little direct harm. The real reason why the abolition of the State Church was called for, was that it stood in the way of that religious equality which the State had resolved to establish. The crucial test, therefore, by which the Government Bill must be examined, is the degree to which it will succeed in establishing religious equality throughout Ireland. We are not without grave doubts as to how far some of the existing provisions of the Bill are altogether consistent with this purpose; and we are convinced that any further changes, if imbued with the character to which we object, would prove well-nigh fatal to the end that the nation has at heart in undertaking the work of dealing with the Irish Church question. The first of the four objects which we have enumerated seems to us very adequately attained. After the Act becomes law, the Anglican Church in Ireland will have no connection with the State other than that which necessarily exists between any important religious organisation and the civil Government. An Episcopal clergyman and a Catholic priest will be placed on exactly the same footing as far as the State is concerned, and the Church of the minority will no longer have any claim to be considered, or to call itself, the Church of Ireland. It would, we think, be matter for extreme regret, if the grace of this instalment of justice to Ireland was marred by any concessions to the feelings of the disestablished clergy. The House of Lords will naturally regret the exclusion of the Irish ecclesiastical peers from their body, and a very plausible case may be made out in favour of allowing the Irish bishops, who have now seats in the House, to retain the privilege for their term of office. The matter may not seem one of much moment: and if a trifling favour could soothe the annoyance caused by the act to a respectable body of men, it might appear ungracious to refuse the boon. But, on the other hand, the presence of the Hibernian bishops in the House of Lords, when once their Church had lost its State character, would be regarded in Ireland as evidence that the State still regarded the Anglican communion in Ireland with especial favour, and would



therefore tend to counteract the very result we desire to produce by disestablishment.

It is in our opinion open to question whether the Government was under any obligation to provide for the second object of the Bill, that is, the creation of a body to stand in the place of the disestablished Church. It is indeed obvious that if any portion of the property of the Church of Ireland is to be handed over to an Anglican communion, some provision must be made for the formation of the, as yet, non-existent communion. As a matter of abstract policy, we are not sure that any portion of the sequestered property need have been so bestowed. If, as we believe, the Anglican Church has a firm hold upon a large section of the Irish nation, it is quite certain to be kept alive by the same agencies which support the Catholic, the Wesleyan, the Presbyterian, and other voluntary Churches. If, on the other hand, Anglicanism has no firm hold on Ireland, then we are at a loss to see why the State should go out of the way to procure for it an artificial prolongation of life. If, however, the State was to intervene at all, it could not do so in a mode less open to objection. According to Mr. Gladstone's scheme, as we understand it, the clergy and laity of the Irish Church are at liberty to draw up any constitution they think fit within a limited period; and, provided the body thus constituted can be fairly said to represent the Church, the property accruing to the Church in its corporate capacity upon the dissolution of the Establishment will be forthwith handed over to the new voluntary organisation. Any number of theoretical objections may be raised to show, *a priori*, that such a body could never be constituted. Practically we believe the problem will be solved without any great difficulty. Owing to the sharp antagonism between Protestantism and Catholicism in Ireland, the Episcopalian Church is a very clearly defined body; so that it will be easy enough to say whether the Church about to be formed does or does not represent the body it professes to represent. The necessities of its condition as the Church of a minority has preserved the Irish Church from most of the internal dissensions which have distracted the Established Church in England; and it is not probable that doctrinal divisions of opinion will stand in the way of the creation of an Anglican communion in Ireland. Moreover, the inducement to sink all differences, for a time at any rate, must needs act very powerfully on all members of the Irish Church. The failure to agree upon a constitution for the disestablished Church would entail the risk of losing, if not the absolute loss of, a very important share of the Church's property; and this fact being patent, we may confidently assume that before January, 1871, a claimant will appear for the legacy assigned to the next-of-kin of the Irish Church, and that the claim will be substantiated by all the certificates required by her administrators and executors.

But, though the difficulty of organising a new Anglican communion

has been got over thus far, we are convinced there is a great amount of trouble in store for the State in time to come, if the Government should be unwise enough to interfere in any way in the organisation or development of the sect which is to inherit the temporal as well as the spiritual succession of the Anglican Church in Ireland. It is probable that great exertions will be made by the supporters of the Establishment to induce the Government to accept the duty of nominating the bishops after the State connection has been severed. We trust these efforts will be unsuccessful. While the Anglican bishops owe their appointment to the State, they will possess a certain official position not accorded to the clerical dignitaries of other communions; and this is exactly the result which the Bill now before Parliament is intended to render impossible. Moreover, if once the State undertakes to fill vacancies in the Irish episcopate, even if the offices thus filled are as purely titular as the colonial bishoprics, it assumes a sort of moral and theological protectorate over the free Anglican Church in Ireland which is alike undesirable and embarrassing.

But the most weighty criticism that can be directed against the Bill applies to the mode in which it deals with the third object it seeks to attain,—the sequestration of the property of the National Church. Disendowment is the term technically applied to this process; but we question whether it is applied altogether correctly. The Government measure only contemplates partial disendowment, and errs, in our judgment, if it errs at all, in not being sufficiently complete and thorough. Everybody is agreed that the life interests of all persons receiving stipends from the Establishment must be provided for, and provided for liberally. We think, however, that a good deal more than this has been done. The abstract principle of disendowment would undoubtedly have been affirmed with far more distinctness if every ecclesiastical functionary had been allowed to retain his cure or incumbency till he should vacate it either by resignation or death, in which case the property from which the stipend was drawn would have reverted forthwith to the State. But this system would have prolonged the dying agony of the Establishment over a period of thirty or forty years or more; and on grounds of policy, as well as of consideration to the Church, it is most desirable to place the Church in its normal position of a voluntary religious organisation with as little delay as possible. Under these circumstances it was deemed better to sequestrate the Church property at once, and to indemnify all existing officials for the loss of their places.

The most straightforward way of settling the amount to be paid in compensation would have been to have had the pecuniary value of each individual incumbent's salary determined by an actuary, and to have handed over to the incumbent the amount thus estimated.

Instead of this, the Government has determined to give a lump sum, representing fourteen years' value of the various cures, prebends, and other offices, to Commissioners, who are to pay the holders of these offices their present incomes during their lifetime, and then hand over the surplus to the Anglican communion. Now, if this lump sum had corresponded with the total formed by adding together the estimated pecuniary value of each incumbency, it stands to reason that, barring accidents, there could have been no surplus to hand over when the trust was fulfilled. Our argument may be illustrated by a very simple demonstration. Supposing you have ten annuitants, all of the age of sixty, each enjoying an annuity of one hundred pounds per annum. Roughly speaking, the probable duration of each life would be ten years. If, therefore, you received ten thousand pounds on condition of continuing to pay each of these ten annuitants a hundred a year during the remainder of their lives, you would find your funds were exhausted when the last annuitant died off. Some of the ten would die before the ten years were over, some would die after, and, taking one with another, there would be neither profit nor loss on the transaction. No doubt, in the example we have given, the holder of the fund would make a profit; because he would be able to lay by the interest of ten thousand pounds for the first year, of nine thousand for the second, of eight thousand for the third, and so on. But then, if the transaction was conducted on business principle, the lump sum given for the payment of the annuities would be, not ten thousand, but ten thousand less the amount that the accumulation of interest would reach during the period to be covered by the annuities. It follows from this that if the disestablished Irish Church is to receive any profit from the reversion of the amount given to the Commissioners for the payment of their present stipends to the holders of benefices, this can only be because the amount represents more than the pecuniary value of these stipends, calculated as annuities. In the same way we would remark, that even supposing, as Mr. Gladstone hopes, the clergy of the Establishment consent to exchange the State for the Church as their paymaster, the Church can only gain by the exchange on one of two hypotheses—either that the clergy undertake to receive less than their stipulated income, or that the capital sum representing the value of their income has been over-estimated. As it seems, however, to be admitted on all sides that when all existing life interests have been provided for, the Church will come into possession of large funds by the gradual lapsing of these annuities, we are forced to the conclusion that the value of these annuities has been purposely over-estimated; and that in consequence a present has been made to the Church of the difference between their real and their estimated value. In other words, the disendowed Church is to be re-endowed to the extent of this difference. In the same way the terms on which the Church is to retain possession of

the glebes and parsonages are so favourable that they amount to a virtual gift; while the proposal to permit the Church to retain all endowments of a later date than 1660 achieves the same object in a more open fashion. The principle on which this proposal is based, though accepted without discussion in Parliament, has always seemed to us of very doubtful logic. After all, to take the extreme case which is quoted as a *reductio ad absurdum* by the advocates of extending the Church's claims to endowments made upon her at a date previous to 1660, we cannot deem any logical injustice would have been perpetrated if the benefactions Sir Richard Guinness provided for the restoration of St. Patrick's had been taken from the Church and employed on secular purposes. We do not say it would have been expedient to do so, but we do say distinctly that the State has exactly the same right to appropriate any endowment made upon the State Church in Ireland in the reign of Queen Victoria, as it had to appropriate any such endowment made in the reign of Queen Elizabeth or King John. And the assumption that the Irish Church has a kind of moral proprietorship of all recent endowments appears to us pregnant with very awkward consequences. It is matter for satisfaction that the Government has thought fit during the progress of the debate to withdraw the clause allotting a subsidy for keeping in repair a certain number of cathedral churches. The amount was not large in itself, but the grant, as proposed, was singularly objectionable in principle. If the Protestants of Dublin or Limerick do not care enough about the possession of their cathedrals to provide the funds to keep them in repair, it is absurd that the State should supply the means for enabling the Protestant minority to keep up places of worship which the Catholic majority would gladly maintain at their own cost.

As a matter of fact, the despoiled Church is expected to start upon its new career with an endowment amounting to at least one-fourth, if not one-third, of the whole property of the Establishment. How far this liberality is well or ill advised is a question which the future must solve. In our comments, we are assuredly not actuated by any ill-will towards the Irish Church. The sympathies of all English Protestants must surely incline towards an Establishment which, whatever its other failings, has always been loyal to English rule, and faithful to Protestant principles; and if the matter was one to be decided by sympathy, we should find it hard to object to any one of the devices by which Mr. Disraeli endeavoured to secure the whole property of the Church for its own use and enjoyment. But the question is one of hard reasoning, not of sentiment; and we confess that if the Irish Church was to be disendowed at all, it would have been better, in our judgment, had the disendowment been more sweeping. There is, as we have already contended, but one ground on which, according to our views, disendowment can be justified; and that ground is, that the property of the Church is national pro-

perty belonging to the whole Irish nation, not to any sect or locality. But if this theory be sound, it follows that any allotment of these national funds to a sectarian or local object is a breach of trust. We are, therefore, in favour of the utmost liberality in dealing with the claims of individuals, but we feel great hesitation about any act of generosity towards the Church in its corporate character.

Had this distinction been more strictly observed in the framing of the measure, we should have been spared the whole difficulty about Maynooth. Very large numbers of Englishmen, who have no sympathy with the views of Mr. Newdegate, yet share with him the dislike to appropriating public money to the purpose of propagating a creed which they deem to be hurtful to the interests of the community. So long as the Protestant Church in Ireland was supported largely out of national property, it was impossible to refuse a certain pittance to the Church of the majority. But with the disestablishment and disendowment of the Anglican Church this necessity ceased; and Maynooth might have been left to its own resources. Unfortunately, the Anglican Church had been allowed to retain so much on one pretext or another,—had had, in fact, the penalty of disendowment applied to her so leniently, that it was felt Maynooth could not be dealt with in accordance with strict theories. The champions of the Protestant Church were precluded from saying much about Maynooth for fear of challenging attention to the share of the spoils that had been accorded to their own communion; and therefore, after true Hibernian fashion, one job,—using the word in no offensive term,—was made an argument and apology for another. Nor can we venture to hope that this departure from the principle of absolute equality will not entail many subsequent derelictions of a like kind. The Irish Catholics are not a body to lose any advantage for want of asking; and their demands upon the national purse are certain to be enforced by the plea that such excessive liberality was shown to the Anglican Church, that if all sects are to be treated alike, they must have a like measure meted out to them.

As to the fourth object of the Bill, the disposal of the surplus funds, there seems to be little difference of public opinion. It is, indeed, probable that the amount of this surplus might have been considerably raised if the landlords had not been permitted to redeem the tithe-rent charges on such favourable terms; and the process by which this result has been effected is open to objections on general grounds. But to say the plain truth, it is not desirable in itself to increase the extent of the surplus. The clause to which Sir Roundell Palmer so strongly objected the other day, and which declares that the funds derived from the sequestration of Church property shall not be used "for the teaching of religion," expresses the fundamental principle of the Bill. The State, in theory at any rate, is henceforward to disassociate itself entirely from any connection with religious teaching in

Ireland; and so long as the severance between Church and State is effected, it matters little what becomes of the surplus revenues of the Church. We are not very sanguine about any great good being done to Ireland by the expenditure of some few millions on hospitals and lunatic asylums. Even in this country the distribution of so large a sum of money for purposes of charity would lead to a vast amount of jobbing; and Ireland, in all matters appertaining to jobs, is far ahead of England. Still, for a time, the county ratepayers will be relieved of a portion of their burdens; and the duty of assisting the sick and infirm is one of the few points concerning which all religious creeds are at one. Indeed, it is difficult to conceive of any other object not of a directly secular kind, on which the residue of the Church property could have been expended without affording scope for sectarian animosities. And as the chief desire of the authors of the measure was to remove these animosities, they did rightly in attaching more importance to the tendency which their scheme of redistribution would have to effect that end than to the absolute utility of the scheme itself.

In the criticisms we have thus offered on the details of the Irish Church Bill we have necessarily ignored the important consideration how far the critical objections we have pointed out may not be essential to the practical success of the measure. In the interests of the Irish Church itself we could have wished for a more rigid application of the principle of absolute religious equality to the mode by which disendowment is to be carried out. But it is more than doubtful whether public feeling in this country would have sanctioned the enforcement of that principle to its strict logical consequences; and, in order to induce the English public to accept a measure which in many respects was naturally distasteful and unwelcome, it was necessary to guard against the outcry that the Protestant Church and clergy in Ireland had been treated without due consideration. In dealing with this question, the Ministry had to remember that they were stepping over the "*ignes suppositos cineri doloso*;" and one false step might have opened a vent for an outburst of fanatic flame. They have avoided this peril, and have brought to maturity a clear, definite, practical scheme for the removal of an institution which has weighed upon Ireland for centuries; and by so doing they have done good service to the State and have raised their own repute. Unlike the Reform Bill of 1866, the Irish Church Bill of 1869 is a complete and statesmanlike measure, on which its authors may look with pride, and its supporters with satisfaction.

## THE SEARCH AFTER THE FOUNTAIN OF JOUVENCE.

A ROMANCE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

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### IV.

So swung we slowly up that lazy flood,  
Rejoicing in the gladness of the time,  
Until its course did leave the open plains  
And turned into a forest, intertwined  
So closely o'er our heads with knitted boughs  
And charm of woven leaves, that we could see  
No glimpse of sun nor glitter of the clear  
Sweet firmament, nor any moving thing,  
But only heard dim splashes in the flood  
Of water-rat or duck, and distant chirp  
Of birds that far above our heads climbed up  
To hymn the mounting chariot of the sun.

In that dim emerald shadow, some strange peace  
And spell of haunting quiet seemed to brood  
And soften all the voices of the wood  
And rustle of the leafage to repose.  
Above us rose the high steep flowered banks,  
Heavy with fragrances from unseen bells,  
Exhaled of sweet and drowsy-scented flowers,  
And all around the columns of the trees  
Stretched dimly in the twilight, like the aisles  
Of some immense cathedral, where the voice  
Of praise and joy is hushed to reverent prayer.  
And there no bird or beast did seem to dwell,  
Nor breeze to creep and sigh among the trees ;  
But in its own mysterious sanctity  
The forest lay, and waited for the voice  
Of some high champion that should break the charm  
And win the secret of those mystic deeps.

The air grew darker, and a fresher breeze  
Sprang up and told us of the waning day ;  
And then the oarsman laid aside his blade,  
And loosed the wide sail from the tapering mast,  
Wherein the glad air gathered did so swell



And struggle, that the boat leapt swiftly on  
Between the shelving woodways. And anon  
The gold of sunset flamed in thro' the mask  
Of thinning trees, and then the prow was free  
From that dark pass of overhanging wood,  
And the day's light was large on us again.

The river lapsed, thro' fringing marish plants  
And ranks of rustling reeds, into the glass  
Of a clear lakelet, where the white discs lay,  
Gold-hearted, in the quiet, and our stem  
Cut thro' the fronded lake-weeds grudgingly  
And won slow way towards the other shore,  
Where, with a hollow roar, the river leapt  
And fell into a dark and shaded cave.

There landed we, and moored the barge with ropes,  
And following our guides, made shift to win,  
Athwart a rocky passage, to a screen  
Of netted boughs and bushes that shut out  
For us the blue horizon's golden marge.  
Some time we struggled through the arduous growth  
Of underwood and brambles, intertwined  
With scarlet-blossomed creepers, till at length  
The last boughs closed behind us, and we stood  
Upon the lower slope of a tall hill,  
And gazed into the sunset with rapt eyes.

A wide deep champaign stretched before our view,  
Encircled by a sapphire chain of hills,  
On whose high crests the crown of sunset lay,  
Hallowing the landscape with a blaze of gold.

Fair and most awful was the majesty  
Of that day's death upon the guardian hills,  
Wrapt in the visible glory of the Lord ;  
And with one impulse, as the budded flames  
Of imminent heaven lay on us, we all  
Fell down upon our knees and worshippéd,  
As knowing the great God was surely there.

So knelt we all in silence, till the sun  
Had faded from the westward, and the grey,  
Washed with pale gold, that fills the interspace  
'Twixt ended day and night, held all the air  
With its mild tender afterglow.

Then he  
Whose brow was kingly with the banded gold  
Arose, and went a little way aside

Within some trees that stood apart from us  
About the casting of an arbalest,  
And made as if he sought for something there ;  
And coming, in a little, back to us,  
He took my hand, and signing to the rest  
To follow, led us all into a nook,  
Wherein tall oak-trees circled round a rock  
Of moss-veined marble.

                  Therein entering,  
A fitful radiance, as it were the play  
Of glancing diamonds, glittered in our eyes,  
And looking round, we saw where from the stone  
A fair clear water trickled, drop by drop,  
Between lush webs of golden-threaded moss,  
And fell in jewelled sprays of liquid light  
Upon the crystal pebbles. Very pure  
And clear it was, and so unearthly bright  
In the dim twilight of that shadowy place,  
We doubted not but here our quest was filled,  
And this was e'en that fountain where our flesh,  
Being laved, should put off sad and weary age,  
And clothe itself anew with goodly youth.

Then he who led us signed to us to drink,  
For this was that same water we had sought  
And wearied for so long by sea and land.

Albeit, for a space we could not stir  
For wonderment, commingled with strange awe  
And ravishment of our fulfilled desires,  
That was nigh pain for very mightiness.

And then Blas stepped towards that trickling thread  
Of crystal, and did stoop him down to drink ;  
And ere his knees touched earth, I, following,  
Bent down my hand into the rippled pool,  
That lay beneath the downfall of the rill,  
And drawing back an instant for surprise  
At the most deadly coldness of the stream,  
Made shift to gather water for a draught  
Within the hollowed middle of my palm.

It scattered into diamonds through the chinks  
Of my unnerved fingers, and did leave  
So scant a pool of fluid in my hand,  
That I was fain to stoop and fill again,  
With more attent precaution, ere I wet  
My lips with it.

I filled my two joined palms,  
And was about to raise them to my mouth,  
Nay, almost steeped my lips, when suddenly,  
Reflected in the streamlet, I was ware  
Of some strange light that was made visible  
From out the dusk above, and looking up,  
I saw a moonèd wonder in the air,  
Full of strange lights and mystic harmonies  
Of blending colour, and as I did gaze,  
I saw a great white cross, that grew and burnt  
In its fair middle.

Wonder and great awe  
Unclasped my hands, and brought them to my face,  
To hide from my weak sight that awful light,  
Whereby the unwilling water once again  
Did have its liberty and showered down,  
Like broken jewels, back into the pool.  
And as I knelt, with awed and hidden eyes,  
I heard a voice that spake from out the bell  
Of that miraculous flower, most reverend  
And awful, as it were the living God ;  
And these words smote my hearing :

“ Foolish men,  
That thought God like another of yourselves,  
That make a work and set it up for good  
And after look again and know it ill,  
And straightway raze and build it up anew,  
Repenting of the framework of your hands,—  
Know that the Lord of all cannot repent  
Nor turn again His ordered harmonies  
Of life and death and nature, saying not  
‘ I have not wrought it seemly—I repent ! ’  
Nor can His hands undo what He has done !

“ O fools and hard of heart ! in all these years  
Have ye then never read earth’s parable  
Of day and night alternate, seed and fruit,  
That tells you dusk must be ere light can come ?  
Lo, in the fields the summer’s lavish bloom  
Is spent and wasted by the autumn’s breath,  
And dies with winter, to revive with spring ;  
And all things fill their order, birds and beasts  
And all that unto earthly weal pertains.  
Nor will the spheric working change its course  
Or slacken for the prayers of foolish men,

That lift fond voice for what their baby eyes  
Deem good and all-sufficient in desire,  
Seeing only, in their circumscribed scope,  
A segment of the circle of God's love.

“ So may not the renewing of lost youth  
Be won but through the natural way of death,  
And man must,—like an ear of corn, that droops  
And withers in the ground before it stir  
And sprout again with gay and goodly bloom,—  
Yield up his wayworn flesh and weary soul  
Into the soothing rest of friendly death,  
Ere a new fire shall stir the curdled blood  
Of age to a new ardour, and the soul  
Be clad afresh with robes of lusty youth.

“ Wherefore know ye that, of a certainty,  
None shall have life, excepting first he die.  
And therefore is this water cold as death ;  
For through its death is life the quicker won.  
Wherefore if ye repent of your desire  
And will to wear in weariness of eld  
The sad remainder of your lagging years  
Rather than dare the icy plunge of death,  
Depart and purge your hearts of foolish hope.”

With that it ceased : and we, for wonderment  
And awe, awhile could neither move nor speak ;  
But still that splendour hung upon the air,  
And still we veiled our eyes for reverence.

Then Perez rose ; and coming to the brink  
Of that miraculous water, knelt and said :  
“ Lord, I have haste for youth, and fear not death,  
For joy of that great hope that is beyond ! ”

Then lightly he addressed himself to drink  
Of that clear stream ; and we, that watched him drink,  
When as the water touched him, saw his face,  
As 'twere an angel's, with heroic love  
And faith transfigured for a moment's space ;  
And then such glory broke from that high cross  
And shone athwart his visage, that we fell  
Aswoon upon the grass for fear and awe,  
And had no further sense of what befell.

When life again returned into my brain,  
The night was wasted, and the early dawn  
Was golden in the Orient. As my eyes  
Grew once more open to the light of day,  
I found myself stretched out upon the sand  
Of that fair shore, where we had landed first,  
Hard by our place of entry in the wood.

Around me lay my comrades ; some, like me,  
Awaking from the trance of that strange sleep,  
And others working on the caravel,  
That lay high up upon the waveless strand,  
Striving to push her down to meet the tide  
That crawled up slowly from the outer sea.

But every sign of our adventurings  
In that fair city, with those goodly men,  
And of that wondrous fountain of the hills,  
Had vanished. In the tangles of the wood,  
The fair white dwellings we had seen with eyes,  
When first the sunset led us to the place,  
Had disappeared, nor in the forest's close  
Green front of woven boughs, that stood opposed  
Towards the ocean, was there visible  
A single opening, wherethrough we might chance  
Again upon the cloistered woodland way,  
That led us to the wonder-lovely town.  
Nor was there any sign or any trace  
Of habitation of men or mortal use  
Therein : but all was as no human foot,  
Save ours, had trodden on the silver sand.

At this we marvelled greatly, and most like  
Would have misdoubted all to be a dream,  
But that there lay beside us on the strand  
Our comrade, Perez, not,—as first it seemed  
To us,—asleep, but,—as we soon knew,—dead.  
And still his visage wore that wondrous smile  
Of deathless ravishment it had put on  
With the clear draught of that miraculous stream.

And so we knew that it had been no dream,  
But that our eyes had seen our hearts' desire,  
And God Himself had surely talked with us.

Long with persistent hope we searched the shore  
Around the little harbour on all sides,

If haply we might once more light upon  
The woodway leading to the inland plain  
And its blithe wonders : but the silent trees  
Were secret, and would show no trace of it.

And so with heavy hearts we left our search,  
And made a grave for burial of the dead,  
And laid him there with a sad reverence,  
With wail and music of a funeral song ;  
For very dear the man had been to us,  
Being of a noble nature and approved  
In all renown of worth and steadfastness.

Then sadly from a little smooth-stemmed tree  
We rove a branch, and hewing it in twain,  
Made shift to fashion of its peeled white wood  
The rude resemblance of the blessed Rood,  
And planted it for memory on the grave.  
And as we did this thing, the forest air  
Was voiceful with the carol of a bird,  
That piped and piped as though he ne'er should die.  
So joyous was his song and full of hope,  
It seemed as if the angel of the dead  
Had entered in the semblance of a fowl,  
And sang to give us lightening of our grief.

And so it came to pass that with the song  
Our hearts were comforted, and some did deem  
They saw himself that stood upon the strand  
And beckoned to us not to tarry there,  
Nor strive against the given will of God,  
But turn our prow from off that hallowed shore.

We waited not for bidding, but launched out,  
And made the swift keel whistle through the surge.

I. P.

THE END.

## INTERNATIONAL COINAGE.

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It was with considerable hesitation and with many reserves that her Majesty's Government was induced to accept the invitation to be represented at the International Monetary Conference, held in Paris in June, 1867, but the results are likely to prove of the greatest importance. It was well that England was represented at that conference. The greatest commercial nation in Europe could not stand aloof from a movement which is certain to give great impulse to commerce, and draw closer the bonds which link together the members of the human family; and we must be prepared to go hand in hand with other countries in forwarding those measures of an international character which so distinguish the age in which we live. The movement in favour of International Coinage is, after all, the natural result of the rapidity of communication, by rail and steam, which England has so successfully developed; of the extension of free trade, which we have initiated; and of the great international exhibitions, which were here first inaugurated. To maintain a proud isolation now is out of the question. Our duty and our interest alike compel us to go forward in removing those barriers which, by isolating the different nations, retard their progress.

Even though the Master of the Mint and Mr. Charles Rivers Wilson of the Treasury, the British representatives at the Conference, were expressly forbidden to commit England in any measure; yet from the fact that they were there, taking part in the discussion, on behalf, and with the authority, of the British Government, a pledge was given that the question would, at any rate, be seriously considered in this country. But more than this. The British representatives stated to the Conference that Her Majesty's Government would assist in every effort for enlightening and guiding public opinion towards the appreciation of the question, as well as in endeavouring to ascertain by what means the assimilation of the coinage of all countries, so advantageous in principle, might be accomplished in practice. And this pledge has been duly fulfilled. The British representatives having made a report to the Treasury on the proceedings of the conference, her Majesty's Government lost no time in issuing a Royal Commission to examine and report upon its recommendations and their adaptability to the circumstances of the United Kingdom, and to report whether it would be desirable to make any and what changes in the coinage of the United Kingdom in order



to establish, either wholly or partially, such uniformity as the conference had in contemplation. The commission was presided over by Viscount Halifax,—formerly Sir Charles Wood, Secretary of State for India,—and comprised, besides the President, three members representing the Government, viz., Mr. Villiers, Mr. Cave, and Mr. Wilson Patten; six representing the banking interest, viz., Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Thomas Baring, Baron Lionel Rothschild, Mr. Thomson Hankey, Mr. Hubbard, and Mr. Hunt; Dr. Longfield, a judge and an economist; Mr. J. B. Smith, M.P., who has given special attention to the subject; the Astronomer Royal, and the Master of the Mint. How far a commission so constituted was capable of appreciating the real bearings of the question at issue, and of entering into the inquiry with enlarged views and an impartial mind, we leave our readers to judge.

But it may conduce to a sound understanding of the question, if we examine first the history and labours of the Paris Conference. Soon after the International Exhibition of 1851, when the circumstances of the day suggested the necessity of obtaining more uniformity in the weights, measures, and coins of all countries, the Society of Arts suggested that, in introducing a change in the coinage on the basis of a decimal system, some arrangement might be made with neighbouring nations for the adoption of a uniform system of coins, weights, and measures throughout the world. But no practical step was taken to bring about such a desideratum. When, however, the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1855 brought out the evils arising from the confusion in the weights, measures, and coins of different countries still more prominently, and the International Statistical Congress, held in Paris at the same time, experienced the same inconvenience, and expressed a desire that it might be removed as speedily as possible, the opportunity was seized for the formation of an International Association for the promotion of the object, which, by its meetings, publications, and representations, succeeded in investing the question with a decided practical interest and importance. In 1862, the British branch of this Association,—always the most active,—succeeded in obtaining a committee of the House of Commons to inquire into the best mode of obtaining a simple and uniform system of weights and measures, which might facilitate our intercourse with foreign countries, and their report led to the legalisation of the metric system in the United Kingdom. And after ten years of discussion and agitation, in this and other countries, an important step was taken, as regards international coinage, in December, 1865, by the conclusion of a monetary convention between France, Switzerland, Belgium, and Italy, for the purpose of regulating the issues of their respective coinage, and making the money issued by each, legal tender in all the countries parties to the convention.

Animated by the success of this convention, M. de Parieu, Vice-

President of the Council of State of France, who had negotiated the same, suggested whether it would not be possible to extend the principle of the convention to other countries also; and in furtherance of this object, the French Government, in December, 1866, sent a despatch to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in England, asking whether, should there be difficulties in the way of the British Government entering in the monetary union, it would be prepared to make some arrangements for establishing an equation between some British gold and silver coin and the coins of the convention, or take part in an international conference for discussing the means for arriving at a more extended monetary agreement. The British Government took some time to consider; but in April, 1867, it announced that, being by no means insensible to the advantages which may result from the discussion and interchange of opinions which may take place at the proposed International Currency Conference, it would be prepared to instruct the Master of the Mint to attend the same, for the purpose of giving and receiving information, and of entering, as far as may be proper, into the discussion of the matters under consideration; but with the understanding that he has no power to bind her Majesty's Government, even impliedly, in any acquiescence in the opinions or decisions at which the conference may arrive. By a singular coincidence, however, and quite independently of these negotiations, in March, 1866, the International Decimal Association and the Metric Committee of the British Association for the advancement of Science suggested to the Imperial Commissioners for the Universal Exhibition of 1867 the holding of a special exhibition of weights, measures, and coins of all countries, and a conference on the subject of their assimilation. Professor Leone Levi laid the proposal before the Imperial Commission and the Commissioners of foreign countries then present in Paris, and the same having been accepted, steps were at once taken to carry it out. Thus it happened, that two conferences were held in Paris in June, 1867,—one of an official character, at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, exclusively on coinage; and the other, of a more popular character, on weights, measures, and coins, at the Palais d'Industrie;—both conferences being attended in many cases by the same representatives, and both being presided over by Prince Napoleon. The countries represented at the official conference were Austria, Baden, Bavaria, Belgium, Denmark, England, France, Italy, Holland, Portugal, Prussia, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United States, and Wurtemberg. At the unofficial, besides these countries, there were represented Morocco, Tunis, and Brazil; so that, in reality, we may say the civilised world was well represented in them. And what have they done?

The first point for consideration in any effort for obtaining uniformity in the coinage of all countries naturally is, Should we create

a system altogether new and independent of any existing one; or should we endeavour to establish a definite mutual co-ordination between the existing systems? Upon the first alternative scarcely any difference of opinion existed, the great majority of representatives at both conferences being decidedly against it. Mr. Stas, the Belgian representative at the official conference, as well as M. Michel Chevalier, at the unofficial, advocated with great ability the creation of a new system, based upon a unit of five or ten grams of gold, on the ground especially that it would be certain not to wound the national predilection of any country. They admitted that were the Conference to adopt such a unit every country would have to recoin the whole of their money, but they thought that the advantage of introducing a system sanctioned by science would counterbalance any inconvenience. It is much to be regretted that this plan did not receive at the hands of the Conference more careful and deliberate consideration, for certainly it has some substantial claims. It would be well if we could establish a distinct relation between the unit of weight and the unit of money. It was so in ancient times with the shekle of Abraham, the as of the Romans, the drachma and the talent of the Greeks, and the pound of England. It would be well if we could connect the international coinage with the metric system, which is making progress among all nations. And it would be an advantage if every obligation for money could convey on its face an obligation to deliver a certain quantity of the precious metal. But we are accustomed otherwise; and though an obligation to pay a pound is, in fact, no more than an obligation to deliver a certain quantity of gold of a specified fineness, we do not regard so much the quantity as the value. And it would be extremely difficult to change our habits in this respect, to say nothing of the trouble and expense of recoinning the entire amount of coinage in circulation in every country. For these and other reasons the proposal of taking five or ten grams of gold  $\frac{9}{10}$ ths fine as a new unit met with little or no support. The conferences saw that such a plan was not practicable; that whatever might be its merits, there was no chance of securing its adoption, and so, without even putting it to the vote, the first alternative was discarded, and the Conference proceeded to consider the possibility of mutual co-ordination of the existing systems.

Having once rejected the introduction of any novel scheme of coinage, the Conference was called to settle which of the existing systems of coinage was entitled to be taken as a basis for the proposed co-ordination. And here, also, with scarcely any discussion, the Conference unanimously resolved in favour of the system of the monetary convention of 1865, which, in fact, is the French system. Whence this unanimity in favour of the French? Why have the Conference not taken the pound, shilling, and pence, which prevail in the

greatest commercial country in the world ; or the American dollar, which, according to the American representatives, is destined to replace all other coins ? The reason is plain. It was not from partiality to France, or from any undue influence exercised by her representatives at the Conference, but for practical and cogent reasons that the French system was adopted. In choosing one of the existing systems of coinage for general adoption in all countries, regard must be had, first, to the population of the countries using it ; second, to their relative amount of trading ; third, to the amount of coinage issued and in existence in the respective countries ; and, fourth, to the relative convenience of different systems. How do the various systems stand as regards the number of persons using them ? Omitting the smaller countries, we find that the pound circulates in the United Kingdom, with a population of 30,000,000 ; the franc in France, Italy, Belgium, and Switzerland, with a united population of about 68,000,000 ; the dollar in the United States, with a population of 31,000,000 ; the florin in Austria, with a population of 34,000,000 ; and the rouble in European Russia, with 59,000,000 inhabitants. The population using the franc is, therefore, more than double that using the pound, and is considerably larger than that using either the dollar or the florin. It has been said that the pound sterling is current not only in England, but in Portugal, Brazil, and Egypt. But so are the Napoleons of twenty francs. If accounts between China, Japan, and Europe are often settled in pounds sterling, that arises, not from any peculiar advantage in the pound, but from the fact that British commerce is supreme over all the East. It is the commerce, capital, and energy of this country that make her coinage known and valued in the farthest corner of the earth. And it will be precisely the same whatever be the coin which she may adopt. As compared with France and the United States separately, the commerce of Britain is far the largest. But it is not much larger as compared with the collective trade of all the countries using the franc. According to the statistical tables published by the Board of Trade, in the year 1865, while the imports and exports of the United Kingdom amounted to £490,000,000, the imports and exports of France, Belgium, and Italy together, exclusive of Switzerland, amounted to £472,000,000. In fact, the trade of these countries has increased enormously in late years, and, consequently, their monetary transactions are becoming very extensive. Then, as regards the amount of coinage in existence ; it is estimated that the amount of gold in actual circulation in France, Belgium, and Italy, is nearly £300,000,000, while the amount of British gold coinage in circulation is given at £100,000,000, from which it will be seen that the inconvenience of a change to another unit would be much more severely felt by countries using the franc, than by England or the United States, the latter having but a small quantity of gold coin in actual circulation. As to the

last element, the comparative merits of the different systems, it is quite clear that whilst this country has been for many years labouring to establish a decimal coinage, France and the United States have long possessed it. And, moreover, whilst a large unit such as the pound may be convenient to a wealthy commercial nation like England, it would by no means be so to other countries accustomed to a smaller one. With such facts before us, can we wonder that the French coinage has gained the preference as a basis for an international system?

But what metal is to be taken for monetary standard? Is it possible to establish any identity or even a partial coincidence in the coinage of different countries on the basis of the silver standard, or are we more likely to obtain such a result by taking a gold standard exclusively? Upon this point a good deal was said, first as to the choice between gold and silver, and then as to the relative advantage of a single or a double standard. As to the preference between gold and silver, the usage of the greatest number of countries sanctions gold as the best standard. Therefore there was no difficulty in coming to a decision on the subject. So general, indeed, is the current of public opinion in favour of gold, that even the representatives of Prussia, the most important state using silver, voted in favour of gold. For purposes of international coinage, gold is especially preferable, it being more easy of transport, and less costly to coin than silver, while it is far more convenient for operations of exchange. The question of a double standard, too, was easily settled. The defenders of the double standard were very few; and, in effect, it was only at the Palais d'Industrie that its claims were urged with great talent and earnestness by M. Wolowski, of the Institute. In his opinion, the French law, which authorises debtors to pay in gold or silver, is in perfect accordance with the Code Napoleon, which establishes the principle that every convention should be interpreted in favour of the debtor. He contended that it is inexpedient to alter the law by which silver is declared to be legal tender, at a time when the annual production of gold is diminishing and that of silver increasing. And he maintained that were we to do so, whenever the circulation of paper money should cease, as it must soon, in Austria, Russia, and America, the demand for the single metal adopted for coinage must be very considerable, and its value would increase to such an extent as to turn all contracts against the debtor. But such statements made no impression whatever on the Conference, which was almost unanimous in condemnation of the double standard, for reasons too palpable to need any remark or explanation at our hand. In connection with the choice of the metal, the conference had to settle what degree of fineness should be adopted. It appeared that France, Italy, Germany, the United States, and many other countries have adopted for their coinage  $\frac{9}{10}$ ths fine and  $\frac{1}{10}$ th alloy; whilst England,

Portugal, and Prussia adopted  $\frac{1}{10}$ ths fine and  $\frac{1}{10}$ th alloy. In other words, gold of British standard is said to be 0.9166 fine, whilst gold of French standard is 0.900 fine. No inconvenience it is alleged would occur in the manufacture of coin or in any other respect from the adoption of one common standard of  $\frac{1}{10}$ ths and  $\frac{1}{10}$ th, and seeing that the majority of States have adopted  $\frac{1}{10}$ ths, the Conference decided accordingly. So far all goes on smoothly enough.

But now we come to the real point of difficulty. What shall be the unit? Is it necessary for the success of uniformity to fix upon a unit identical everywhere as to metal, weight, and denomination; or should we be content with establishing a point of contact in a common denominator; and if so, what should that be? The proposal to adopt some coin of the many in use as a common denominator was suggested by the accidental fact that some of the most important units now bear a near relation to the 5-franc piece, and an impression was created that we should take hold of this coincidence, not only because it would avoid some of the main obstacles which lie in the way of a complete reform, but because we would thereby reconcile England and the United States. The proposal at first sight appeared very feasible and easy. Let the United States only alter the value of her dollar to that of five francs, and let England alter the pound to a trifling extent, so that it may be worth 25 francs exact, instead of 25f. 20c., and a great approach between the different currencies is thereby obtained. As the Royal Commissioners have put it, by such an arrangement as this a French 5-franc piece and an United States dollar would each be equal to four English shillings. A 25-franc piece and an United States half-eagle would each be equal to an English sovereign. Four United States dollars and a French napoleon would each be equal to sixteen English shillings; five dollars would be equal to an English sovereign. There are, however, many fallacies connected with the proposal; and when we come to examine it closely, it does not appear that we should thereby attain the end in view. First, as to the fallacies. It is stated that England can easily alter the pound to the value of 25 francs. M. Feer Herzog, the Swiss representative, said that the 20 centimes' difference are but slightly more than the limits of tolerance; and that no recoinage would be necessary. But it is not so. The British representatives justly answered that whatever truth there might be in this, the British Government would feel itself called in honour not to extend that limit or to regard that tolerance as a ground for lowering the quantity of gold in sovereigns. They said that much inconvenience would arise from leaving in circulation sovereigns worth 25f. 20c. and new sovereigns of the reduced value of 25 francs; that a recoinage would be necessary, and that if once the pound be reduced to 25 francs, further changes would be inevitable, involving probably the ultimate abandonment of

the sovereign. The representatives of the United States made light of the difference in the value of the dollar, amounting to nearly  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. But we have since seen that the Senate thought otherwise. Nor was there any great unanimity as to the advantage of taking the 5-franc piece as the common denominator. M. Stas, the Belgian representative, pointed out how unpopular the 5-franc piece in gold is, and how small would be the difference in size between the different gold coins if they were issued of the value of 5, 10, 15, 20, and 25 francs. It is now easy to mistake between the 10-franc and the 20-franc. How much more difficult will it be to distinguish the coins when the difference in diameter will consist of only one millimètre? In his opinion it would be far better to raise the common denominator to 10 francs, and to continue the silver 5 francs. M. Wallenberg, the Swedish representative, also spoke in favour of a common denominator of 10 francs, which would be perfectly decimal, while the gold piece of 5 francs would neither agree with the decimal system nor with the franc. The hundredth part of 5 francs, or 5 centimes, would be too large as the smallest coin; but the thousandth part of the 10 francs would give a good coin as the lowest in the monetary scale. When the same question was brought forward at the unofficial conference, Professor Leone Levi advocated precisely the same thing, and proposed the substitution of 10 francs to 5 francs, showing that the 5-franc piece was too small, too easily lost, and too low for large transactions, while the 10 francs would constitute a more natural and convenient decimal unit for all nations. And M. de Parien himself expressed an opinion that the 10-franc piece would be particularly convenient for France as a monetary unit. In accountancy it would have this advantage, that by the simple change of place of the comma it was easy at once to express a new and larger unit. Such a coin had once an extensive circulation under the name of ducat; and, moreover, it used always to be the lowest gold coin before the five-franc piece in gold was issued. The representatives of Austria said that they could easily have a gold coin of 10 florins, equal to 25 francs, but that they preferred a 4-florin piece, of the value of 10 francs to a 5-florin piece of the value of 12f. 50c. In truth, there was no agreement on the point, and when it was put to the vote thirteen representatives voted for it, the representatives of England and Sweden voted against it, and those of Prussia, Baden, Wurtemberg, and Belgium abstained from voting. As a sequel to this resolution the Conference resolved that another coin of 25 francs should be added to the coins of the Convention; but, if this was intended as a compliment to England, the British representatives did not appear very grateful for it. It has been erroneously suggested that the Conference, by sanctioning the coinage of a 25-franc piece, meant to adopt it as an universal unit. But nothing could be further from the intention



either of France or of any other country. Though it was intended to have a coin in the scale of the money of the Convention similar to the pound of reduced value coined in England, nobody ever meant to make it the universal unit of accountancy. What the Conference decided on this point was, that the gold piece of 5 francs should be taken as the basis of the monetary system of all nations, and that other units should by small changes be rendered either conformable to or exact multiples of that gold piece.

Such being the main points discussed at the Paris Conferences, let us see how the matter presented itself to the Royal Commissioners on International Coinage in this country. The practical difficulty connected with the assimilation of French and English coinage is the necessity already indicated to alter the intrinsic value of the sovereign to an equivalent of 25 francs. At present the pound sterling contains 113,001 grains of fine gold. The 25-franc piece would contain 112,008 grains of fine gold, or .993 of a grain less, or in value 2.126*d.* in the pound, equal to .88, or very nearly  $\frac{1}{10}$ ths per cent. How can this change best be made, and what will be the consequences? The reduction of the pound to 25 francs would require a diminution of nearly 1 per cent. in the amount of fine gold in the sovereign. But, at present, the British Mint is the only mint in Europe that charges nothing for the manufacture of coins. We have only to add 1 per cent. seignorage, as other countries do, in the way M. Hendriks, Colonel Smith, and others propose, and subject to certain modifications which would have still to be made by the Mints of other countries, the value will just be equalised. It is objected that though by this method the exchangeable value might become the same, the intrinsic value would be different, and that we could not with such altered coin discharge existing obligations contracted upon the faith of a coin of a certain weight and fineness. The contract, said Mr. Newmarch, is for a commodity, and can only be discharged by payment of the stipulated quantity. The best answer to this is that all obligations are contracted for payment in the coin of the realm, and if the State, for proper reasons, should think fit to cease manufacturing coins for the public without charging the necessary cost, the debtor will be fully justified in offering in payment of his debts the new coin at its current value. And as the same regulations will be in force in all countries which are parties to the Convention, international payments will be everywhere satisfied in the same manner by a given amount of fine gold plus the rate of seignorage. This of course would not hold as regards countries not parties to the Convention, but in these cases payments will be made in bar gold, and not in coin. If this be correct, and upon careful consideration it will be found to be so, the necessity of a tariff will be obviated. No compensation will be due or necessary, and no loss will result to any one. Mountains of difficulty will, in fact, be removed from the realisation of an

international coinage. A re-coinage will doubtless be necessary, since it would not do to have two kinds of sovereigns in circulation, especially with the altered proportion of alloy. But it will be a great matter if by the single and natural expedient of imposing a seignorage we can bring the real value of French and British coinage into perfect harmony.

The great question is, will the change, difficult and troublesome as it must prove in any case, effect all the good we wish it to produce? If it will, we need not be frightened by the temporary inconvenience; but if it will not, it is better to wait till we can mature a more complete plan. Now it is most unfortunate that the proposal of the Monetary Conference contemplated only a change in the coins, without in the least touching the systems of currencies. The strength, in fact, of the suggestion was the approximation of the coins of different countries, whilst leaving the units as they are. But if we have to do no more than altering the sovereign, the trouble will be greater than the benefit. As the Commissioners said:—

“The adoption of the proposal of the Paris Conference of merely reducing the value of the pound to that of 25 francs, would facilitate the comparison of sums stated in large coins, but the difficulty would remain of comparing sums expressed in pence in England, in centimes in France, and in cents in the United States, and it is seldom that statements of prices or statistical returns do not contain sums expressed in these small denominations.

“The reduction of the value of the pound would disturb all existing obligations, and would cause the many and serious difficulties which we have stated in the earlier part of this report; whilst if at any future time a more complete assimilation of coins should be determined upon, a further change would be required, in many respects more difficult of application.

“The measure is, after all, only a partial measure, and although advocated by some witnesses as good in itself, and as a step to further assimilation, the object sought for by the witnesses connected with the trade and with the scientific bodies of this country would not be fully attained by anything less than a complete assimilation of the currencies of different countries.

“Several witnesses who took this view deprecated any change unless a complete assimilation of currencies of money of account, as well as of coin was made; and it is a serious objection that by this step all the admitted evils of the change in the value of the pound would be incurred, while the advantages by which it is anticipated that these evils would be compensated would not be attained.

“Upon full consideration of all these circumstances we do not recommend that this country should merely adopt a gold coin of the value of 25 francs, to be substituted for the sovereign.”

With these conclusions we entirely agree. The Conference was

wrong in stopping at half measures. They were warned that such a mode of co-ordination would not satisfy England, and would not introduce a universal unit, and they ought to have known that in this country we were by no means agreed that the pound can be made a good decimal unit. By trying to reconcile the existing systems a splendid opportunity was lost for advocating a complete and satisfactory scheme for all countries.

And what is this scheme? It is the one which the Master of the Mint at the official conference, and Professor Leone Levi at the unofficial, distinctly put forth, that is, the adoption of a 10-franc piece as a universal decimal unit. This unit is founded on the coinage of the Convention, and is therefore in existence in most countries of Europe, though it essentially differs from the franc,—in as much as it is a gold and not a silver unit. And we can easily adapt the unit to the British coinage. The 10-franc piece would be a gold unit of one hundred new pence, and would be divided into ten new shillings of ten pence each. And it would have this additional advantage, that if such unit should be found too small for large transactions, nothing is easier than to alter the place of the comma and calculate by the 100 francs, equivalent to four pounds sterling, the 10-franc and the 100-franc pieces having, of course, appropriate English names, such as a Ducat or a Victoria. The new coins of this system, according to the evidence of Mr. Samuel Brown, slightly altered, would be as follows:—

## GOLD.

Value of Present English Coins.			Value of New English and International Coins.		
£	s.	d.	Victorias.	Fcs.	Cts.
4	(large unit)		10		100 0
2	0 0		5		50 0
1	0 0		2½		25 0
0	16 0		2		20 0
0	8 0		1		10 0

## SILVER.

£	s.	d.	Fcs.	Cts.
0	4 0		5	0
0	1 8		2	0
0	0 10		1	0
0	0 5			50
0	0 2½			25

## COPPER.

£	s.	d.	Cts.
0	0 1		10
0	0 0½		5
0	0 0¼		2
0	0 0 1/16		1

The great advantage of this plan is that it would be thorough and universal. For statistical calculations, and for all comparisons of large value, we would not need either to multiply or divide to get equal value. The figures themselves would exhibit perfect identity. The assimilation would not be limited to the principal unit. It would go through all the coins. A cent would be of the same value all the world over. A ten-pence would be equally the same, everywhere uniform. Then, moreover, we would have a perfect decimal system with only two places of decimals instead of three, the bane of the

pound and mil scheme ; and lastly, if we have to meet the difficulty in the diminution of intrinsic value of the sovereign, we should do so with a new system of coinage which would create no confusion whatever with the existing one.

The difficulty of this scheme certainly is that it would displace the pound, a coin so well known, so ancient,\* and so respected, from its place of a unit to that of a subsidiary coin. In the eye of many, especially those connected with the banking interest, there is no coin like the pound. It is contended by them that the pound is the only representative of value which is negotiable in every commercial mart ; that as it undergoes no fluctuations, it is the steady point to which all commercial nations look ; that it is the recognised cosmopolitan centre which regulates all subordinate representations of value ; that the idea of the pound and the penny has become an almost universal presence, —a sort of national inheritance,—and that the words pound and penny are scriptural words, associated with our earliest and most irradicable thoughts. But admitting all this, are we, after having uncompromisingly fought against monopoly and abuse of all kind, prepared to advocate the perfect isolation of this country in deference to old cherished associations ? Are we to be blind to the altered course of commerce, to the effect of increasing competition, and to the evident necessities of the times ? The present exclusive system acts as a kind of monopoly in favour of large houses of trade, who can afford to keep skillful foreign clerks. Are the opponents of the change sufficiently alive to the importance of extending our trade with the retailers, as well as the wholesale dealers of other countries ? There is no question as to the utility of an international coinage. The general opinion of the witnesses before the Royal Commission certainly was that great advantage would result from such a measure,—that it would diminish the trouble and loss of time in preparing invoices, lists of prices, and commercial statements,—that it would simplify transactions, and greatly facilitate calculations of exchange,—that it would promote the convenience of travellers,—that it would facilitate the understanding of foreign tariffs,—and that in many ways it would benefit trade and manufacture. The evidence of Mr. Field, Chairman of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, puts the value of the proposed reform on a very solid basis. “The cost of everything,” he said, “represents time and labour, and the cost of goods consists

\* The sovereign is by no means so old as is generally supposed. Accounts have for many centuries been kept in England by the pound sterling, but that represented not a coin, but a certain quantity of pure gold, which has varied from time to time till 1717, when, under the administration of Sir Isaac Newton, as Master of the Mint, the pound was declared to be of the present weight of gold, viz., 113·001 grains. The sovereign, or twenty-shilling piece, was put in circulation by proclamation, dated 1st July, 1817. The same was ordered to be of the weight of five pennyweights three grains,  $\frac{25}{1000}$  troy weight, of standard gold.

partly of the time and labour of knowing what they will come to in the country into which they are imported. If you double the labour of distribution by any means, you must add proportionally to the cost." After the patient inquiry they have instituted, it is well that we have had the verdict of the Commissioners, "that they entertain no doubt that an uniform system of coins, bringing into harmony the various standards of value and moneys of account, alike in their higher denominations and their lower sub-divisions, as well as an uniform system of weights and measures, would be productive of great general advantage." It is something to have had it affirmed that an arrangement to bring about a harmony in the monetary system of all countries "is one in which all commercial countries are interested, and none more deeply than our own."

The conference has been followed by practical action on the part of other States. Greece and the Papal States have since passed laws for assimilating their coins to the currency agreed upon by the Convention of 1865, and have already made the necessary changes. Roumania followed the same course. The United States have taken action in the matter. Bills have been introduced both in the Senate and Congress to promote uniformity of coinage between the moneys of the United States and other countries. In Canada a Bill was introduced in Parliament to put the coinage on the same principle. The Federal Parliament of the North German Confederation passed resolutions in favour of international coinage; Sweden proposed to strike gold coins equivalent to 10 francs and 25 francs. France is about to alter its standard and to adopt gold as the sole standard of value. What will Great Britain do on the subject? This is the point now before us, and to this the attention of Parliament is to be immediately directed.

Are we to stand still, and be a stumbling-block to the progress of the question throughout the world? Certainly such an attitude toward other civilized nations would not be becoming, nor would it redound to the benefit of the trade of this country. If there be any point on which further explanations are required, or if other measures of detail are yet to be agreed upon, let us by all means seek another International Conference, and we are glad to find that the Royal Commissioners suggested this step. But let us go into the question with no misgiving or fear. Of this we may be certain, that the more complete and universal we can render the agreement, the more beneficial it will prove to all mercantile countries. Already an enormous progress has been achieved as regards weights and measures; and there is no reason why a similar accord should not be arrived at regards the coinage. The object in view is great and beneficial, and we should not allow national prejudices and natural apathy to stand in the way of its early and satisfactory attainment.

## THE DEATH OF PROCRIS.

A VERSION SUGGESTED BY THE SO-NAMED PICTURE OF PIERO DI  
COSIMO, IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY.

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PROCRIS the nymph had wedded Cephalus ;—  
Fawn-footed Procris, thrall in ancient days  
To her, night-huntress on Tajjetus,  
High-kirtled Dian ; but in unknown ways,  
His love was gone ; and evermore his gaze  
Turned from her own, and ever farther ranged  
His woodland war ; while she, in dull amaze,  
Beholding with the hours her husband changed,  
Sighed for his last caress, by some hard god estranged.

So, on a day, she rose and found him not.  
Alone, with wet, sad eye, she watched the shade  
Brighten below a soft-rayed sun that shot  
Arrows of light through all the deep-leaved glade.  
Then, with weak hands, she knotted up the braid  
Of her brown hair, and o'er her shoulder cast  
Her crimson wedge ; with faltering fingers made  
Her golden girdle's clasp to join, and past  
Down to the trackless wood, full pale and overcast.

And all day long her slight spear devious flew,  
And harmless swerved her arrows from their aim,  
For ever, as the ivory bow she drew,  
Before her ran the still unwounded game.  
Then, at the last, a hunter's cry there came,  
And, lo, a hart that panted with the chase.  
Thereat her cheek was lightened as with flame,  
And swift she gat her to a leafy place,  
Thinking,—“ I yet may chance, unseen, to see his face.”

Leaping he went, this hunter Cephalus.  
Bent in his hand his cornel bow he bare,  
Supple he was, round-limbed and vigorous,  
Fleet as his dogs, a lean Laconian pair.  
He, when he spied the brown of Procris' hair  
Move in the covert, deeming that apart  
Some fawn lay hidden, loosed an arrow there;  
Nor cared to turn and seek the speeded dart  
Bounding above the fern, fast following up the hart.

But Procris lay among the white wind flowers,  
Shot in the throat. From out the little wound  
The slow blood drained, as drops in autumn showers  
Drip from the leaves upon the sodden ground.  
None saw her die but Lelaps, her swift hound,  
That watched her dumbly with a wistful fear,  
Till, with the dawn, the hornéd Wood-men found  
And bare her gently, on a sylvan bier,  
To lie beside the sea, with many an uncouth tear.

A. D.

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## LUDWIG TIECK.

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It is little more than thirty years since the study of the German language and literature was received into the ordinary curriculum of an English education. The great writers of Germany had of course been known and relished long before by the erudite; but it was not for Lessing, nor for Göthe, nor for Schiller, that the language became so popular among us as to be generally listened to in song, and loitered over in leisure, and even made to supersede the regulation study of Italian in young ladies' school-rooms. Göthe, indeed, was hardly "proper reading" for young ladies at all; Schiller's best dramas might be enjoyed in Coleridge's translation; the grim old rationalist Lessing was very little of a poet in the popular sense. But at the date in question, there came to pass a very general feeling that Germany possessed a national and characteristic literature of imagination which could only be thoroughly relished by those who understood the language; and which was, in fact, imparting to the language itself a new richness, variety, and pathos. The "moon-blighted magic night," the "forest-loneliness," "spring-longings," "art-poetry;" these and such-like verbal combinations hung on to a set of images and sentiments to which no other literature had the key. Now this prevalent and distinctive German taste had a historical beginning, and a name. It began with Ludwig Tieck; and it was called the literature of Romanticism.

Tieck was born in 1773, and was the son of a ropemaker at Berlin. His mother, devout and earnest, with her hymn-book always in her hand, represented the old-world piety of the German middle class; his father, an upright, hard-headed citizen-mechanic, with a taste for letters, and a high sense of the benefits of education, was in harmony with the intellectual movement which swayed Berlin society in his time. That movement was the famous "Aufklärung," or "enlightenment," developed in a universal impetus for the "diffusion of useful knowledge," and the enthronement of common sense on the altars of religion and literature. It was part of the great pre-revolutionary liberal tendency throughout Europe, which had supervened on the teaching of Voltaire and Rousseau,—a tendency systematically opposed to transcendentalism in faith, to self-will in genius, and in most countries, but not in Prussia, opposed also to despotism in politics. In Prussia, Friedrich der Einzige, the "Only," as his subjects loved to call him, held the reins too tight for the permission of any such

vagaries as the Austrian "Illuminati" indulged in. Perhaps on that account the Aufklärer of Berlin were even more conceited in their paper liberalism than their neighbours. Their chief literary oracle was Nicolai, the celebrated bookseller.

Gedike, the pedagogue under whom Ludwig Tieck was placed, was an intellectual leader of the prevalent type, and an ardent, pedantic school reformer. Under him and his coadjutors the boy's progress was rapid, and his lessons were marked by very superior ability. He devoured books with insatiable ardour, borrowing the coveted treasures wherever he could find them. In his early enthusiasm for Werther and Götz von Berlichingen he was abetted by his father, who ventured to turn heretic against the ruling canons of taste on the subject of the daring young author Wolfgang von Göthe. "Don Quixote" delighted him. But, above all, on account of its after significance, the story of his first introduction to Shakspeare deserves record. One day a stray volume containing a translation of "Hamlet" was lent him by a friend. Tieck hurried homewards after school hours with his treasure in his hand, eager to bury himself in its pages; but impatience got the better of him. He had to pass an avenue of poplars bounding the Lust-garten. It was late autumn; a misty afternoon; and the rain began to fall. Under the trees hung a few dim oil lamps. Tieck stopped and opened his book; by the light of the oil lamps he might at least catch a glimpse of the "dramatis personæ." But having done that, to pause was impossible. He read on in a perfect trance of forgetfulness as to all outward circumstances. Wind, rain, comfortless posture, all were unheeded. Not till the last scene was ended, did he close the book. Then, cold and wet, he proceeded home, little recking of the reprimand that probably awaited him. A new world had been revealed to him in that hour's reading. The first impulse had been given to his own poetic character. Other influences in after life helped to shape that character,—his fanciful spirit was open to many; but the magic of Shakspeare held paramount sway over his heart from that day to his last. He had found his master.

It was a heavy lot, and one which pursued Tieck through life, that his most valued and loved companions mostly fell off from him by death after a short enjoyment of their friendship. Some severe losses of this kind, when he was about sixteen years old, preyed upon him to such a degree as seriously to shake his health, bodily and mental. A gloomy scepticism laid hold upon him; a dread of coming madness haunted him. To one of his tutors he unbosomed his wretchedness, and expressed a half wish that he could betake himself to some convent of the Middle Ages, there to vegetate in religious seclusion. This was a shock to the votary of Berlin "enlightenment." "Tieck," he replied, "for such a speech you deserve to be hung!" His consolation came at last: he sought and found it in nature. For

hours together he would forget himself in some secluded spot, where the whisper of the trees, and the descant of some solitary bird, were the only sounds that came to him. Sometimes he would lie stretched on the grass, after the sun had set, far on into the night, or even till break of day, when he would get up steeped in dew. Sometimes he would wander away for days, through wind and rain, through villages or over desert heaths. The perusal of "*Faust*," at this date, powerfully affected him. Through all this tumult the poetic spirit worked her empire over his soul. It was a poetical "conversion." Love came to aid his recovery. He wooed and won. Amalie Alberti became his affianced bride.

To write became now a mental necessity for the ardent youth; and he tried his hand at a new "sensation" literature which was beginning to surge out of the excitement engendered by the French Revolution. The "*Sturm und Drang*" movement broke upon the current platitudes of the day with its romances of terror and diablerie: the origin, it may be observed, in passing, of the "*Monk Lewis*" style among ourselves, on which Walter Scott's early fancy fed. Tieck's weird tale of "*Abdallah*" was a product of this period.

His schooling had yet to be completed; and at nineteen years of age he was sent to Halle University, and from thence to Göttingen. His prevalent tastes, however, lay in other departments than the metaphysics cultivated at the one university, or the classics favoured at the other. The year 1793 was rendered memorable to him by a summer tour which he made in company with his intimate friend Wackenroder, who was about to study at Erlangen. They visited Jena, Weimar and Erfurt, Gotha and Coburg, and returned to Erlangen, where Tieck decided to remain, as a student also, for a few months. Erlangen had but lately become a portion of the Prussian monarchy. The minister Hardenberg was endeavouring to give the university a status higher than it had yet attained under the petty Princes of Bayreuth. The best education for Tieck, however, was that derived from the glories of the natural scenery, and the interest of the old world-castles and cities within reach. In Nuremberg especially, that Pompeii of medieval life, as it has been called, the young students conjured up animated visions of the past, whose relics are so faithfully preserved there. They stood at the graves of Albert Durer and Hans Sachs, and weaved the motley fancies which came to light subsequently in the pages of "*Sternbald*," and the "*Convent Brother*." Everywhere Tieck gleaned fruitful experiences of life and adventure, of antiquarianism and the picturesque. On his return to Göttingen,—whither Wackenroder accompanied him,—he devoted himself to the study of Shakspeare, and laid the foundations of what, in his hands, may almost be said to have become a distinct science. He was impressed with the shallowness of the English commentators, and with the ignorance of everything but the name of

Shakspeare prevalent,—with a few exceptions,—among Germans. To advance on principles of historical and psychological inquiry, to ransack the whole of Elizabethan literature for the illustration of his topic, was in his view indispensable. It was his ambition to write an exhaustive work on the subject; but this project, entertained till the evening of his life, was never achieved. He contributed much valuable detailed criticism in various parts of his writings, and his translations of Shakspeare's dramas were masterly; but the most signal result of his labours was to inaugurate the modern philosophical school of Shakspeare-interpretation, in which, with more or less of tact or of super-refined ingenuity, so many English and German writers have taken up their parable in modern times.

Wackenroder meanwhile gave his mind to medieval German literature, and sought to read the heart of the Minnelieder and the old heroic poems; and what Wackenroder learnt and felt became Tieck's by communication. In 1794 the academical life of the two young men came to an end, and they returned to Berlin. Little had altered there. The old spirit of the Aufklärer was still predominant. Göthe's name was the Shibboleth of the day. The reigning critics judged of him as they did of Shakspeare,—that he was a man of irregular valent, popular merely because he said out whatever came into his head, without method or habit. "I could do just as well," said Engel, shrugging his shoulders, when speaking of "Faust," and so said Nicolai of "Egmont." The devotees of Göthe found their best support in some of the salons of the ladies of Berlin. Rahel Levin, the Fräulein Veit, and Henriette Herz helped to concentrate and encourage the new voices in literature, and Tieck was not slow to join their society. He was prudent enough, however, to apply to Nicolai for the patronage of his first professional venture as a man of letters, and received from that potentate a commission to complete a collection of anecdotes and tales refashioned from old French sources, which the death of the original compiler, Musæus, had brought to a standstill. Its title was *The Straussfedern*,—"Ostrich Feathers." Tieck soon got wearied of the work of compilation, and interspersed inventions of his own, which struck Nicolai by their superiority to the old material. He also found time to write two detached tales, "Peter Lebrecht; a Tale without Adventures," and "William Lovell." These stories were of very opposite character and tendency. The first was a half concealed satire on the school of "enlightenment." Nicolai liked the tale, and scarcely surmised its latent hints. In "William Lovell," on the other hand, Tieck portrayed the tragic feelings which he had experienced in his own days of depression, the overwrought aspirations of a soul which placed no curb on its imaginative fervour. The moral he inculcated,—a ripe one for a sage of twenty years old,—was resignation; the inevitable advent either of disillusion or of shipwreck; the

duty of patient self-control and self-limitation. The novel, however, was too dark and wild to please the public, who greatly preferred the humorous common-places of "Peter Lebrecht."

And now, as his poetic feeling began more clearly to take shape in his mind, he turned to the old popular legends as the fitting vehicle for its development. The "Volksmärchen" of Musæus had already given some of these tales a "setting" in modern literature; but Musæus had treated them from the eighteenth-century point of view, with sportive condescension, as it were. Tieck felt it to be his mission to reverse the process, to discover true wisdom in the mythical fancies of the bygone time, and, by implication, to put to scorn the modern march of intellect. Under the fictitious editorship of "Peter Lebrecht" he first dramatised the tale of "Blue Beard," in 1796, adapting the characters and circumstances to mediæval German life. The spirit and novelty of this work made a great impression. Several other old legends followed, mostly with the same introduction. In "Puss in Boots," "The World turned Topsy Turvy," and subsequently in "Prince Zerbino," he openly derided the superficiality of the Aufklärer and the stupidity of the critical public in general. This led to a breach with Nicolai. The great publisher became at last aware of the presence of a traitor within his camp. One of the above-named pieces had been offered for insertion in the "Ostrich Feathers," but Nicolai rejected it as impertinent and unedifying. Tieck published it on his own responsibility. A new German literature had come to the birth, and he, almost unconsciously to himself, was its appointed exponent.

The years 1797-8 saw another application of his literary power. His friend Wackenroder died, carrying with him a host of yearnings, and instincts, and sympathies, which to Tieck had been like the completion of his own intellectual being. Wackenroder was an enthusiast for art and its sentimentalities,—for mediæval art more especially; he literally pined to death in the struggle to follow an uncongenial profession at his father's behest. Tieck sought to console himself and do honour to his friend's memory by raising a literary monument out of their combined speculations on artistic subjects. To this phase of his career as an author belong the unfinished romance, called "The Wanderings of Franz Sternbald,"—"Franz Sternbald's Wanderungen;" "Art Fantasies,"—"Phantasien über die Kunst;" and the concluding portion of a composition left in MS. by his deceased friend, entitled, "Herzensergiessungen eines Kunstliebenden Klosterbruders." More or less, in later days, such esthetic fictions as Longfellow's "Hyperion" and the "Transformations" of Nathaniel Hawthorne, have grown out of the ideas originated in these works.

Tieck's imagination, sombred by bereavement, now imbibed a new element of culture in the works of the old theosophist, Jacob Böhme. For the time his mind was steeped in earnestness: the

satiric impulse had passed away from him. Some said he had turned Roman Catholic, but his confidential biographer, Köpke, strongly refutes the suggestion. In his literary retirement he studied afresh the Spanish authors, Cervantes, Calderon, and Lope de Vega, whose rich imagery delighted his taste; and, full of new impressions, he sought for a subject on which to work them out. This he found in the medieval legend of "Genoveva." The conflict of Christianity with Paganism, of faith conquering in patience with wild natural passion, this was the mystic interpretation he gave to the material on which he founded an epic drama, the first of his so-called "*Romantische Dichtungen*," and effectively the corner-stone of his poetical reputation.

For he now came into close literary connection with the Schlegels, who had just begun their famous critical journal, the "*Athenæum*," in which they endeavoured to build up a new theory of poetry. They set out with eulogy of Göthe; but Göthe's was not an example on which to found a school. He was too many-sided, too independent, too superior to themselves, in fact. The Schlegels wished to bring in, not as casual caprice merely, but as esthetic law, the love of medieval life, art, history, and romance. Tieck was the very poet to their hand. He was not, indeed, himself a doctrinaire in these matters; but his mind was richly imbued with the fancies of the Christian past, and he was a fluent versifier. In 1799 he repaired to Jena, where he lived principally with the brother-critics and with the poet-philosopher Novalis, whose newly-acquired friendship was of such an intimate and endearing character as to prove a compensation, and even more than a compensation, for the loss of Wackenroder.

It was an active and animating life he led at Jena. In after years he looked back upon it as altogether the brightest period of his career. The Schlegels gathered round them a select literary circle, and held up Tieck as the poet of a new era. He continued to publish his "*Romantische Dichtungen*," encouraged by the applause they met with, and rejoicing in a sense of thoroughly congenial occupation. He visited Schiller and Göthe. With the former he could never attain to more than superficial intercourse. Schiller's was not a nature to attract or to impress him greatly. For Göthe's genius he had always entertained the highest reverence; but Göthe the man, to his disappointment, remained somewhat inaccessible to him. He used afterwards to describe his impressions from the first interview. "That is a great, a perfect man; you may well fall down in admiration before him." But then a whisper from the depths of his soul, "Could you make him your friend, your confidant?" and the answer would be, "No; that thou canst not do." The real truth was, that Göthe at this time entertained a mild antipathy to Tieck,—as we know from the revelations of his "*Boswell*," Eckermann,—being provoked at seeing him started as a rival to himself by the Schlegels. "No one

can be more willing than I am," he said, "to acknowledge his merits, but when his friends laud him above his deserts, and set him up as a counterpart to me, they are mistaken. . . . I speak in all simplicity. I am what God made me: it would be as absurd if I were to compare myself with Shakspeare."

Tieck's energetic use of his faculties up to this time had been sustained by vigorous bodily health. But he had made severe demands on his constitution in the voluntary exposures of his early years, when rain and storms were courted as the accompaniments of his melancholy musings. Nature's revenge came; and from his twenty-sixth year onward he became a martyr to attacks of rheumatism and gout, which disabled him sometimes for months together, and made his life at best but that of a valetudinarian. He left Jena in the spring of 1800, after getting the better of his first attack. On his way back to Berlin he stopped at Hamburg, and there chanced to meet on a book-stall with the old legend of the "Emperor Octavian." As in earlier times with "Hamlet," so now with "Kaiser Octavianus;" having once opened the book, he could not lay it down, but read it straight through in the face of the flowing stream, in the balmy summer air. The poetic vision was kindled, and two years afterwards his romantic version was published, perhaps the most complete and elaborate of his works in this style. Well might the words of conjuration echoed by the chorus in the prologue stand as a motto for all his fairy-world:—

"Mond beglänzte Zaubernacht,  
Die den Sinn gefangen hält,  
Wunderbare Märchenwelt,  
Steig' auf in der alten Pracht!"

When Tieck arrived at Berlin in the autumn of 1800, he had to realise his position there as the model poet of a new and flourishing school. He had no ambition to be the captain in a literary warfare, but he found himself quoted, and often exaggerated or travestied, by those who cried up the merits of "Genoveva" and "Melusina," and the "Fair Magelone." On the other hand, a party in direct opposition to him soon raised its head. The supercilious criticism of the Schlegels and their fellow-workers in the "Athenæum" had made many enemies. Who were they, it was asked, to force down their favourite authors, Göthe, Fichte, and now Tieck, upon public recognition? Tieck was credited with many sarcastic allusions in his works which he never intended. Kotzebue, with especial malice, even tried to fasten political suspicion upon him on account of some expressions in "Prince Zerbino." The uncongenial atmosphere of Berlin soon induced him to transfer himself to Dresden as a place of residence. His arrival there was marked by sorrow. The death of Novalis, in the spring of 1801, came upon him as one of those heart-crushing blows which seem to have been peculiarly his lot: the



severance of a brotherhood in intellect. Tieck used to say that Novalis was a necessity of his very being; that their reciprocal understanding of each other's heart was a kind of prescience. He complained that the faculty of love itself had been rent within him by his friend's death. His readiest solace, as in the case of Wackenroder, was to do literary honour to the memory of the departed. In conjunction with Frederic Schlegel, he proceeded to publish the writings which Novalis had left behind him, together with a memoir of his life.

The ten years which succeeded the publication of "*Octavianus*," 1802—1812, were altogether no bright period of his life. His health was mostly very bad. He moved from place to place, visiting various medical baths, and residing for a time at Ziebingen, near Frankfort, at Munich, and at Rome. From 1806 to 1813 the Napoleonic invasion disjointed the order of government and society in Germany. It was a dreary time for literature, all but the literature of military and patriotic ardour, into which Tieck did not enter. He worked on in his own fashion, chiefly devoted to the study of Shakspeare and the old German poets and mystics, and in 1811 he published his charming "*Phantasmus*," a collection of tales, fables, and dramas, some of which had seen the light before, while some were of recent composition, joining them together in a conversational framework, after the manner of Boccaccio.

In the summer of 1814 he was again in Berlin. The capricious city was then infected with an atmosphere of animal magnetism and its cognate mysteries. Physicians and natural philosophers were in agitation. Visions were narrated from mouth to mouth. The credulous and the incredulous formed two hostile camps. Tieck, though naturally inclined to sympathy with the weird and mystical, was repelled rather than attracted by the current tales of wonder, which seemed to him too trifling in their results to have any abiding interest.

In 1816 he published "*Fortunatus*," the last of his works of legendary romance. It was written in prose; and was neither so simply and trustingly medieval in its treatment as "*Genoveva*," nor so lively and varied as "*Octavianus*." An ironical tendency was apparent in it, indicative of a change in the turn of his mind to which we shall presently recur.

Soon after the publication of "*Fortunatus*," in 1817, he made a tour to England and France, in company with his old school friend Burgsdorff. There were two points of chief interest for him in London,—the British Museum and the theatres. In the reading-room at the Museum he pursued his Shakspeare studies, and copied an immense number of manuscripts. The English theatre he considered as decidedly below the German in merit. He was fortunate in having opportunities of seeing both Kemble and Kean on the stage; but the former did not come up to his idea of a perfect tragedian,—he was too



declamatory, he said, and reminded him of Iffland;—while the mannerism of Kean, his vehemence and incessant action, pleased him even less. He had some refreshing intercourse with Coleridge concerning the great dramatist whom they both worshipped; and used to relate how once, after a long exposition of his views, Coleridge said to him the next day, "I have been cogitating over your opinions all night, and have learnt from them much that is new to me." Tieck was surprised as well as pleased at the ready recognition. "Still," added Coleridge, "I cannot accept them." "And why not?" asked Tieck, still more surprised. "Simply because I will not accept them; for they contradict all that has been thought and written about Shakespeare in England up to this time." To fight against so national a point of view, Tieck felt to be hopeless.

In July he proceeded to Paris. Here, on his visits to the Royal Library, he was somewhat astonished to find that people would gather in knots to look at him, exchanging glances and whispers. Old officers, especially, who had served under the late Emperor, would gaze upon him with countenances indicative of melancholy interest. After a while he found that the cause of this attraction was the remarkable likeness he happened to bear to the great Napoleon.

Soon after his return to Germany he decided to settle at Dresden. But fate pursued him still with its cruel bereavements. Scarcely had he set up his rest at Dresden again, when he lost the friend who, after the death of Novalis, had been the dearest confidant of his thoughts and emotions,—the metaphysician Solger. The blow was a difficult one to surmount. A few years later, in conjunction with Raumer, he published Solger's literary remains.

Tieck was now forty-six years old. The meridian sun was over his head. Germany had undergone a marvellously thorough change within the last quarter of a century. Thrones and states had been hurled down and re-erected. New voices, wants, and aims had come to the birth. It was not the Germany of 1807, still less that of 1792. In the literary struggles which had contributed their share to the transformation of the national mind, Tieck had occupied a foremost place. Where was the generation against which he had wielded the weapons of his early wit and fancy? Dead and forgotten was the old *Aufklärung*, the triumphant world-enlightenment of the great Frederick's time. Who would not now be ashamed to quote as authorities in philosophy or taste the once revered names of Nicolai, Ramler, or Moses Mendelssohn? And the genial race of the "*Stürmer und Dränger*" was also no more. Schiller had been dead many years. Göthe lived in a sort of super-mundane dignity at Weimar, watched the changes succeeding each other around him, and was now immersed in Oriental and scientific studies, but no longer sought actively to influence his generation. And even a third school was becoming, to a certain extent, obsolete. Tieck's own more intimate comrades

in the battle-field of letters were most of them gone,—Rambach, Reichardt, Bernhardt, Wackenroder, Novalis. The Schlegels still survived, but their friendship had faded away. August Wilhelm was transformed into a man of the world, a cosmopolitan in literature and society; Friedrich had plunged deeper into mysticism, and had become an ardent votary of the Romish faith.

The world belonged to a yet younger race, those who called themselves the children of Romanticism; who had come to maturity when the Schlegel and Tieck coterie was in the first flush of success, and to whom it had always appeared the right thing to be "believing" and "medieval" in their proclivities, just as in earlier times it was the right thing to be "rational," "clear-sighted," and "sensible." Formerly, morality was supposed to make all religious faith and dogma superfluous. Now, mere "morality" was decried, and faith exalted. Formerly, experience was the one safe guide, now the rising talents pleased themselves with thinking that miracle might confute experience at any moment. In the recoil from the high-sounding principles of abstract right and reason which the hated Revolution had patronised, history, nationality, and ecclesiastical sentiment now occupied men's minds. It was a signal and dire revenge on the self-appreciation of the last generation.

Tieck was left far behind by this on-rushing stream, but that he and his friends had given the first impulse to it was unquestionable. To himself he seemed to stand in the position of a superannuated "Philistine" to a new generation. The literary fops who now, taught by himself, laughed at the Aufklärer, seemed to him almost more ridiculous than the Aufklärer themselves. How could he give them the sympathy they thought themselves entitled to demand of him? At Dresden, it is true, he felt these special repugnances less than elsewhere; but he had others to contend with, for there the traditions of the pre-Revolution times were not altogether extinguished, and he had actually to preach up the merits of Göthe and Shakspeare. In a very short time, indeed, an admiring circle gathered round him; and it was a satisfactory recognition of his merits when, in 1825, the King of Saxony bestowed on him the post of official critic of the drama, with the title of Hofrath, and a salary of 700 thalers per annum. "So now at last," he wrote to one of his friends, "I actually get paid for going journeys and seeing plays! To have had floggings for it in youth, and to be made a Privy Councillor for it in age,—such is the course of life!"

On the whole, the decade from 1820 to 1830 was a period of calm enjoyment to Tieck. His means were ample, his official occupation agreeable, his health less suffering than of yore, his position one of universal respect and honour. His productive activity had found a new field in the "Novels" which he put forth from time to time. These were short tales, after the manner of Boccaccio and Cer-

vantes, turning upon some special display of character or opinion, and treating it in a strain of philosophic irony. It was a style of authorship altogether unlike that of the romantic poet of "Geneveva" and "Octavianus." But Tieck had outgrown his romantic fervour, and the romanticism of the age had long outgrown him. Indeed the public was beginning to tire of it. La Motte Fouqué and Hoffmann, the latter more especially, had by their extremes paved the way for a reaction. Curiously enough, this happened just when the style in question was beginning to make its impression on English taste, and when, interchangeably, the Waverley Novels, which had lost their first freshness in England, were beginning to raise up numerous imitators in Germany. Tieck looked on and smiled in his "Novellen" at the various literary affectations that passed under his notice. Of these productions we must say a word. The estimate formed of them has been various. By his warm admirers they are, or were, held to be high expressions of philosophic satire; by others his humour is maintained to be heavy, and his narratives often far-fetched and disagreeable. We hold that his pretensions to the character of a humourist were on the whole a mistake. Tieck was facile princeps in one domain only, and that was the domain of glorified legend. It was a passing "revival," and a very fascinating one,—that medieval, mystical revival in which he led the way. He had divined its points of contact with modern feeling, and touched them off with a master's hand. But when he attempted to enter another field,—that of which Jean Paul's genius was properly master,—he could only take an inferior place. If, however, the highest type of humour was wanting in the tales of his later life, the sound common sense which lay at the foundation of his character came into strong play in them. In one, "Die Gemälde," he caricatured the art-fanaticism of the modern medievalists; in "Die Verlobung," the "Evangelical" puritanism of the day was the subject of his satire; in another, certain absurd musical exaggerations of a school of amateurs; in another, ghost stories à la Hoffmann; in another, the rage for animal magnetism; in another, some theories respecting man's moral instinct. The enthusiasm of his youth had certainly toned down to very prosaic proportions. Alas, how common is the downfall!

Dresden, at this time, with the rich intelligence which abounded in it, and the princely patronage which helped to sustain that intelligence, bore no slight resemblance to the Weimar of the passing generation. Prince John, the beloved sovereign who at this day occupies the phantom-throne of Saxony, was then, as he has been ever since, a warm promoter of literature, and one of its distinguished ornaments. In his "Dante Gesellschaft," he assembled a society of men of letters for the discussion of the subject in which he himself took especial interest. At their meetings his own translations would

be read aloud,—generally by Tieck,—and the freest criticisms would be encouraged, the prince listening or joining in the debate with the simplicity of a disinterested inquirer. Tieck himself gave evening receptions, at which he read aloud plays of Shakspeare, or some of his own works. These readings obtained great celebrity, and were attended by visitors from far and near. His birth-days were celebrated with public honours. Dresden was proud of possessing Tieck, as Weimar was of possessing Göthe. In 1828 he visited Weimar, and had his last interview with the great poet. Göthe's death, in 1832, affected him deeply. The star whose worship had been a part of his nature had withdrawn its shining, and it was small consolation to him that the throne of contemporary German poetry now devolved on himself as its occupant. And yet another death seemed to sever him from all the past of his literary life,—that of Friedrich Schlegel. The last visit of this eccentric genius to Dresden was in 1828, when he was more than ever sunk in the mazes of prophetic mysticism, and severed far as the poles from Tieck's sympathy.

The outbreak of the Revolution of 1830 at Paris shook anew the security of Continental society. As usual in Germany, the spirit of defiance and opposition found expression first in the realm of literature. Admiration of Lord Byron, the modern "Faust," the heaven-storming Titan, who doubted everything, and combated all existing institutions, was the favourite sentiment. Heine was the poet in the first ranks of the new school. "Young Germany," at this date, however, was not content with literary expression only, but aspired to that action hitherto denied to public opinion. Tieck was a special object of unpopularity with the advanced Liberals. Not only was he spurned as the originator of "Romanticism," he was also accused of being a renegade, and of ridiculing in the novels of his later years the very enthusiasms he had first created. He was personally maligned; even his bodily ailments were not spared. But on him,—the old man who had seen the wheel go round so many times,—these reproaches made little impression. He contented himself with satirizing his enemies in his "Novellen," and waited for the time when democratic fervours too should have become obsolete.

The excitement of that period did, in fact, calm down before long. But domestic sorrows awaited the poet. He lost his wife in February, 1837. Four years later died his daughter Dorothea, who inherited her father's sensibility and taste, as well as a more abiding portion of the melancholy which had once darkened his life. She had become a Roman Catholic, and tortured herself with religious scrupulosity; but she retained a love of literature, and had helped her father in his Shakspeare studies and translations. Tieck gave himself up to almost hopeless sorrow at her death. He would see nobody, and do nothing. His maladies were increasing; old age was at hand; his

energies were failing; his occupations had become irksome to him. What more could life offer? But the end was not yet; another act of the drama was in store for him, and the stage scenery was to undergo a final shifting. Twelve long years had still to be lived through.

A few days after Dorothea's death he received an invitation from the new King of Prussia, Frederic William IV., to pass the summer at Potsdam. He had no difficulty in accepting the offer. The Saxon capital had become a desolation for him. Henceforth, with the exception of one or two visits to Dresden, Berlin and Potsdam became his home for the rest of his life. He regained cheerfulness and interest in literature, and his society and advice were courted in the most flattering manner by his royal patron, who was never weary of attending to his personal comforts. A summer residence was fitted up for him near Sans Souci, whither he transported his large and valuable library. He resumed his readings of dramatic poetry, which had now attained an European reputation. But his energies were chiefly called forth in aid of the adaptation of ancient classical plays to the modern theatre, which the king was eager to promote. The first representation of the "Antigone" of Sophocles took place October 28, 1840, in the royal palace at Potsdam. It became popular, and was soon after acted, as will be remembered, on the London stage.

Again the wheel went round, and another year of revolution came. On March 18, 1848, barricades were raised, and fighting went on under the windows of the venerable poet's house at Berlin. He spent the night out of bed, occupied with his books. Months of political excitement followed, and literary interests were everywhere at a standstill. To Tieck himself the "constitutional" movement was distasteful. He expected nothing from the march of popular ideas: his sympathies were with strong monarchical government. Yet it was not without anxiety that he witnessed the reactionary excesses which followed the democratic storm; neither the political nor the ecclesiastical exclusiveness of the Junker party were to his liking.

His death came after long and gradual decay, on the 28th of April, 1853. Nature remained true to her poet. While his body was being consigned to the earth, on the 1st of May, the first warmth of spring was felt, after a peculiarly long and dreary winter, and the lark flew upwards into the blue expanse. As the mourners left the churchyard, the nightingale began to sing in the fresh green leaves.

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## THE SECRET OF THE NORTH POLE.

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If an astronomer upon some distant planet has ever thought the tiny orb we inhabit worthy of telescopic study, there can be little doubt that the snowy regions which surround the arctic and antarctic poles must have attracted a large share of his attention. Waxing and waning with the passing seasons, those two white patches afford significant intelligence respecting the circumstances of our planet's constitution. They mark the direction of the imaginary axial line upon which the planet rotates; so that we can imagine how an astronomer on Mars or Venus would judge from their position how it fares with terrestrial creatures. There may, indeed, be Martial Whewells who laugh to scorn the notion that a globe so inconveniently circumstanced as ours can be inhabited, and are ready to show that if there were living beings here they must be quickly destroyed by excessive heat. On the other hand, there are doubtless sceptics on Venus also who smile at the vanity of those who can conceive a frozen world, such as this outer planet must be, to be inhabited by any sort of living creature. But we doubt not that the more advanced thinkers both in Mars and Venus are ready to admit that, though we must necessarily be far inferior beings to themselves, we yet manage to "live and move and have our being" on this ill-conditioned globe of ours. And these, observing the earth's polar snow-caps, must be led to several important conclusions respecting physical relations here.

It is, indeed, rather a singular fact to contemplate that ex-terrestrial observers, such as these, may know much more than we ourselves do respecting those mysterious regions which lie close around the two poles. Their eyes may have rested on spots which all our endeavours have failed in enabling us to reach. Whether, as some have thought, the arctic pole is in summer surrounded by a wide and tide-swayed ocean; whether there lies around the antarctic pole a wide continent, bespread with volcanic mountains larger and more energetic than the two burning cones which Ross found on the outskirts of this desolate region; or whether the habitudes prevailing near either pole are wholly different from those suggested by geographers and voyagers,—such questions as these might possibly be resolved at once, could our astronomers take their stand on some neighbouring planet, and direct the searching power of their telescopes upon this terrestrial orb. For this is one of those cases

referred to by Humboldt, when he said that there are circumstances under which man is able to learn more respecting objects millions of miles away from him than respecting the very globe which he inhabits.

If we take a terrestrial globe, and examine the actual region near the North Pole which has as yet remained unvisited by man, it will be found to be far smaller than most people are in the habit of imagining. In nearly all maps the requirements of charting result in a considerable exaggeration of the polar regions. This is the case in the ordinary "maps of the two hemispheres" which are to be found in all atlases. And it is, of course, the case to a much more remarkable extent in what is termed Mercator's projection. In a Mercator's chart we see Greenland, for example, exaggerated into a continent fully as large as South America, or to seven or eight times its real dimensions.

There are three principal directions in which explorers have attempted to approach the North Pole. The first is that by way of the sea which lies between Greenland and Spitzbergen. We include under this head Sir Edward Parry's attempt to reach the pole by crossing the ice-fields which lie to the north of Spitzbergen. The second is that by way of the straits which lie to the west of Greenland. The third is that pursued by Russian explorers who have attempted to cross the frozen seas which surround the northern shores of Siberia.

In considering the limits of the unknown north-polar regions, we shall also have to take into account the voyages which have been made around the northern shores of the American continent in the search for a "north-western passage." The explorers who set out upon this search found themselves gradually forced to seek higher and higher latitudes if they would find a way round the complicated barriers presented by the ice-bound straits and islands which lie to the north of the American continent. And it may be noticed in passing, as a remarkable and unforeseen circumstance, that the farther north the voyagers went the less severe was the cold they had to encounter. We shall see that this circumstance has an important bearing on the considerations we shall presently have to deal with.

One other circumstance respecting the search for the north-west passage, though not connected very closely with our subject, is so singular and so little known that we feel tempted to make mention of it at this point. The notion with which the seekers after a north-west passage set out was simply this, that the easiest way of reaching China and the East Indies was to pursue a course resembling as nearly as possible that on which Columbus had set out,—if only it should appear that no impassable barriers rendered such a course impracticable. They quickly found that the American continents



present an unbroken line of land from high northern latitudes far away towards the antarctic seas. But it is a circumstance worth noticing, that if the American continents had no existence, the direct westerly course pursued by Columbus was not only not the nearest way to the East Indian Archipelago, but was one of the longest routes which could have possibly been selected. Surprising as it may seem at first sight, a voyager from Spain for China and the East Indies ought, if he sought the absolutely shortest path, to set out on an almost direct northerly route! He would pass close by Ireland and Iceland, and so, near the North Pole, and onwards into the Pacific. This is what is called the great-circle route, and if it were only a practicable one, would shorten the course to China by many hundreds of miles.

Let us return, however, to the consideration of the information which arctic voyagers have brought us concerning the north polar regions.

The most laborious researches in arctic seas are those which have been carried out by the searchers after a north-west passage. We will therefore first consider the limits of the unknown region in this direction. Afterwards we can examine the results of those voyages which have been undertaken with the express purpose of reaching the North Pole along the three principal routes already mentioned.

If we examine a map of North America constructed in recent times, we shall find that between Greenland and Canada an immense extent of coast-line has been charted. A vast archipelago covers this part of the northern world. Or if the strangely-complicated coast-lines which have been laid down really belong to but a small number of islands, the figures of these must be of the most fantastic kind. Towards the north-west, however, we find several islands whose outlines have been entirely ascertained. Thus we have in succession North Devon Island, Cornwallis Island, Melville Island, and Port Patrick Island, all lying north of the seventy-fifth parallel of latitude. But we are not to suppose that these islands limit the extent of our seamen's researches in this direction. Far to the northward of Wellington Channel, Captain de Haven saw, in 1852, the signs of an open sea,—in other words, he saw, beyond the ice-fields, what arctic seamen call a "water-sky." In 1855 Captain Penny sailed upon this open sea; but how far it extends towards the North Pole has not yet been ascertained.

It must not be forgotten that the north-west passage has been shown to be a reality, by means of voyages from the Pacific as well as from the Atlantic. No arctic voyager has yet succeeded in passing from one ocean to the other. Nor is it likely now that any voyager will pursue his way along a path so beset by dangers as that which is called the north-west passage. Long before the problem had been solved, it had become well known that no profit could be expected



to accrue to trade from the discovery of a passage along the perilous straits and the ice-encumbered seas which lie to the north of the American continent. But Sir Edward Parry having traced out a passage as far as Melville Island, it seemed to the bold spirit of our arctic explorers that it might be possible, by sailing through Behring's Straits, to trace out a connection between the arctic seas on that side and the regions reached by Parry. Accordingly McClure, in 1850, sailed in the "*Investigator*," and passing eastward, after traversing Behring's Straits, reached Baring's Land, and eventually identified this land as a portion of Banks's Land, seen by Parry to the southward of Melville Island.

It will thus be seen that the unexplored parts of the arctic regions are limited in this direction by sufficiently high latitudes.

Turn we next to the explorations which Russian voyagers have made to the northward of Siberia. It must be noticed, in the first place, that the coast of Siberia runs much farther northward than that of the American continent. So that on this side, independently of sea explorations, the unknown arctic regions are limited within very high latitudes. But attempts have been made to push much farther north from these shores. In every case, however, the voyagers have found that the ice-fields, over which they hoped to make their way, have become gradually less and less firm, until at length no doubt could remain that there lay an open sea beyond them. How far that sea may extend is a part of the secret of the North Pole; but we may assume that it is no narrow sea, since otherwise there can be little doubt that the ice-fields which surround the shores of northern Siberia would extend unbroken to the farther shores of what we should thus have to recognise as a strait. The thinning-off of these ice-fields, observed by Baron Wrangel and his companions, affords, indeed, most remarkable and significant testimony respecting the nature of the sea which lies beyond. This we shall presently have to exhibit more at length; in the meantime we need only remark that scarcely any doubt can exist that the sea thus discovered extends northward to at least the eightieth parallel of latitude.

We may say, then, that from Wellington Channel northward of the American continent, right round towards the west, up to the neighbourhood of Spitzbergen, very little doubt exists as to the general characteristics of arctic regions, save only as respects those unexplored parts which lie within ten or twelve degrees of the North Pole. The reader will see presently why we are so careful to exhibit the limited extent of the unexplored arctic regions in this direction. The guess we shall form as to the true nature of the north-polar secret will depend almost entirely on this consideration.

We turn now to those two paths along which arctic exploration, properly so termed, has been most successfully pursued.

It is chiefly to the expeditions of Drs. Kane and Hayes that we owe the important knowledge we have respecting the northerly portions of the straits which lie to the west of Greenland. Each of these explorers succeeded in reaching the shores of an open sea lying to the north-east of Kennedy Channel, the extreme northerly limit of those straits. Hayes, who had accompanied Kane in the voyage of 1854-5, succeeded in reaching a somewhat higher latitude in sledges drawn by Esquimaux dogs. But both expeditions agree in showing that the shores of Greenland trend off suddenly towards the east at a point within some nine degrees of the North Pole. On the other hand, the prolongation of the opposite shore of Kennedy Channel was found to extend northwards as far as the eye could reach. Within the angle thus formed there was an open sea "rolling," says Captain Maury, "with the swell of a boundless ocean."

But a circumstance was noticed respecting this sea which was very significant. The tides ebbed and flowed in it. Only one fact we know of,—a fact to be presently discussed,—throws so much light on the question we are considering as this circumstance does. Let us consider a little whence these tidal waves can have come.

The narrow straits between Greenland on the one side, and Ellesmere Land and Grinnell Land on the other, are completely ice-bound. We cannot suppose that the tidal wave could have found its way beneath such a barrier as this. "I apprehend," says Captain Maury, "that the tidal wave from the Atlantic can no more pass under this icy barrier to be propagated in the seas beyond than the vibrations of a musical string can pass with its notes a fret on which the musician has placed his finger."

Are we to suppose, then, that the tidal waves were formed in the very sea in which they were seen by Kane and Hayes? This is Captain Maury's opinion:—"These tides," says he, "must have been born in that cold sea, having their cradle about the North Pole." But no one who has studied the theory of the tides can accept this opinion for a moment. Every consideration on which that theory is founded is opposed to the assumption that the moon could by any possibility raise tides in an arctic basin of limited extent.

It would be out of place to examine at length the principle on which the formation of tides depends. It will be sufficient for our purposes to remark that it is not to the mere strength of the moon's "pull" upon the waters of any ocean that the tidal wave owes its origin, but to the difference of the forces by which the various parts of that ocean are attracted. The whole of an ocean cannot be raised at once by the moon, but if one part is attracted more than another a wave is formed. That this may happen the ocean must be one of wide extent. In the vast seas which surround the Southern Pole there is room for an immensely powerful "drag," so to speak; for always there will be one part of these seas much nearer to the moon

than the rest, and so there will be an appreciable difference of pull upon that part.

The reader will now see why we have been so careful to ascertain the limits of the supposed north-polar ocean, in which, according to Captain Maury, tidal waves are generated. To accord with his views this ocean must be surrounded on all sides by impassable barriers either of land or ice. These barriers, then, must lie to the northward of the regions yet explored, for there is open sea communicating with the Pacific all round the north of Asia and America. It only requires a moment's inspection of a terrestrial globe to see how small a space is thus left for Captain Maury's land-locked ocean. We have purposely left out of consideration, as yet, the advances made by arctic voyagers in the direction of the sea which lies between Greenland and Spitzbergen. We shall presently see that on this side the imaginary land-locked ocean must be more limited than towards the shores of Asia or America. As it is, however, it remains clear that if there were any ocean communicating with the spot reached by Dr. Kane, but separated from all communication,—by open water,—either with the Atlantic or with the Pacific, that ocean would be so limited in extent that the moon's attraction could exert no more effective influence upon its waters than upon the waters of the Mediterranean,—where, as we know, no tides are generated. This, then, would be a tideless ocean, and we must look elsewhere for an explanation of the tidal waves seen by Dr. Kane.

We thus seem to have *prima facie* evidence that the sea reached by Kane communicates either with the Pacific or with the Atlantic, or—which is the most probable view—with both those oceans. When we consider the voyages which have been made towards the North Pole along the northerly prolongation of the Atlantic Ocean, we find very strong evidence in favour of the view that there is open-water communication in this direction, not only with the spot reached by Kane, but with a region very much nearer to the North Pole.

So far back as 1607 Hudson had penetrated within eight and a half degrees (or about 600 miles) of the North Pole on this route. When we consider the clumsy build and the poor sailing qualities of the ships of Hudson's day, we cannot but feel that so successful a journey marks this route as one of the most promising ever tried. Hudson was not turned back by impassable barriers of land or ice, but by the serious dangers to which the floating masses of ice, and the gradually thickening ice-fields exposed his weak and ill-manned vessel. Since his time, others have sailed upon the same track, and hitherto with no better success. It has been reserved to the Swedish expedition of last year to gain the highest latitudes ever reached in a ship in this direction. The steam-ship "*Sofia*," in which this successful voyage was made, was strongly built of Swedish iron, and originally intended for winter voyages in the Baltic. Owing to a number of

delays, it was not until September 16th that the "Sofia" reached the most northerly part of her journey. This was a point some fifteen miles nearer the North Pole than Hudson had reached. To the north there still lay broken ice, but packed so thickly that not even a boat could pass through it. So late in the season it would have been unsafe to wait for a change of weather, and a consequent breaking up of the ice. Already the temperature had sunk sixteen degrees below the freezing point; and the enterprising voyagers had no choice but to return. They made, indeed, another push for the north a fortnight later, but only to meet with a fresh repulse. An ice-block with which they came into collision opened a large leak in the vessel's side; and when after great exertions they reached the land, the water already stood two feet over the cabin floor. In the course of these attempts the depths of the Atlantic were sounded; and two interesting facts were revealed. The first was that the Island of Spitzbergen is connected with Scandinavia by a submarine bank; the second was the circumstance that to the north and west of Spitzbergen the Atlantic is more than two miles deep!

We come now to the most conclusive evidence yet afforded of the extension of the Atlantic Ocean towards the immediate neighbourhood of the North Pole. Singularly enough this evidence is associated not with a sea-voyage, nor with a voyage across ice to the borders of some northern sea, but with a journey during which the voyagers were throughout surrounded as far as the eye could reach by apparently fixed ice-fields.

In 1827 Sir Edward Parry was commissioned by the English Government to attempt to reach the North Pole. A large reward was promised in case he succeeded, or even if he could get within five degrees of the North Pole. The plan which he adopted seemed promising. Starting from a port in Spitzbergen, he proposed to travel as far northward as possible in sea-boats, and then, landing upon the ice, to prosecute his voyage by means of sledges. Few narratives of arctic travel are more interesting than that which Parry has left of this famous "boat-and-sledge" expedition. The voyagers were terribly harassed by the difficulties of the way; and, after a time, that most trying of all arctic experiences, the bitterly cold wind which comes from out the dreadful north, was added to their trials. Yet still they plodded steadily onwards, tracking their way over hundreds of miles of ice with the confident expectation of at least attaining to the eighty-fifth parallel, if not to the pole itself.

But a most grievous disappointment was in store for them. Parry began to notice that the astronomical observation by which in favourable weather he estimated the amount of their northerly progress, showed a want of correspondence with the actual rate at which they were travelling. At first he could hardly believe that there was not some mistake; but at length the displeasing conviction was

forced upon him that the whole ice-field over which he and his companions had been toiling so painfully was setting steadily southwards before the wind. Each day the extent of this set became greater and greater, until at length they were actually carried as fast towards the south as they could travel northward.

Parry deemed it useless to continue the struggle. There were certainly two chances in his favour. It was possible that the north wind might cease to blow, and it was also possible that the limit of the ice might soon be reached, and that upon the open sea beyond his boats might travel easily northward. But he had to consider the exhausted state of his men, and the great additional danger to which they were subjected by the movable nature of the ice-fields. If the ice should break up, or if heavy and long-continued southerly winds should blow, they might have found it very difficult to regain their port of refuge in Spitzbergen before winter set in, or their stores were exhausted. Besides, there were no signs of water in the direction they had been taking. The water-sky of arctic regions can be recognised by the experienced seamen long before the open sea itself is visible. On every side, however, there were the signs of widely-extended ice-fields. It seemed, therefore, hopeless to persevere, and Parry decided on returning with all possible speed to the haven of refuge prepared for the party in Spitzbergen. He had succeeded in reaching the highest northern latitudes ever yet attained by man.

The most remarkable feature of this expedition, however, is not the high latitude which the party attained, but the strange circumstance which led to their discomfiture. What opinion are we to form of an ocean at once wide and deep enough to float an ice-field which must have been thirty or forty thousand square miles in extent? Parry had travelled upwards of three hundred miles across the field, and we may fairly suppose that he might have travelled forty or fifty miles farther without reaching open water; also that the field extended fully fifty miles on each side of Parry's northerly track. That the whole of so enormous a field should have floated freely before the arctic winds is indeed an astonishing circumstance. On every side of this floating ice-island there must have been seas comparatively free from ice; and could a stout ship have forced its way through these seas, the latitudes to which it could have reached would have been far higher than those to which Parry's party was able to attain. For a moment's consideration will show that the part of the great ice-field where Parry was compelled to turn back must have been floating in far higher latitudes when he first set out. He reckoned that he had lost more than a hundred miles through the southerly motion of the ice-field, and by just this amount, of course, the point he reached had been nearer the pole. It is not assuming too much to say that a ship which could have forced its way round the great floating ice-field would certainly have been able to get within four degrees of the pole.

It seems to us highly probable that she would even have been able to sail upon open water to and beyond the pole itself.

And when we remember the direction in which Dr. Kane saw an open sea,—namely, towards the very region where Parry's ice-ship had floated a quarter of a century before,—it seems reasonable to conclude that there is open-water communication between the seas which lie to the north of Spitzbergen and those which lave the north-western shores of Greenland. If this be so, we at once obtain an explanation of the tidal waves which Kane watched day after day in 1855. These had no doubt swept along the valley of the Atlantic, and thence around the northern coast of Greenland. It follows that densely as the ice may be packed at times in the seas by which Hudson, Scoresby, and other captains have attempted to reach the North Pole, the frozen masses must in reality be floating freely, and there must therefore exist channels through which an adventurous seaman might manage to penetrate the dangerous barriers surrounding the polar ocean.

In such an expedition chance unfortunately plays a large part. Whalers tell us that there is great uncertainty as to the winds which may blow during an arctic summer. The icebergs may be crowded by easterly winds upon the shores of Greenland, or by westerly winds upon the shores of Spitzbergen, or lastly, the central passage may be the most encumbered, through the effects of winds blowing now from the east and now from the west. Thus the arctic voyager has not merely to take his chance as to the route along which he shall adventure northwards, but often, after forcing his way successfully for a considerable distance, he finds the ice-fields suddenly closing in upon him on every side, and threatening to crush his ship into fragments. The irresistible power with which, under such circumstances, the masses of ice bear down upon the stoutest ship has been evidenced again and again; though, fortunately, it not unfrequently happens that some irregularity along one side or the other of the closing channel serves as a sort of natural dock, within which the vessel may remain in comparative safety until a change of wind sets her free. Instances have been known in which a ship has had so narrow an escape in this way, and has been subjected to such an enormous pressure, that when the channel has opened out again, the impress of the ship's side has been seen distinctly marked upon the massive blocks of ice which have pressed against her.

Notwithstanding the dangers and difficulties of the attempt, and the circumstance that no material gains can reward the explorer, it seems not unlikely that before many months are passed the North Pole will have been reached. Last year two bold attempts were made, one by the Swedes, as already mentioned, the other by German men of science. In each case the result was so far successful as to give good promise for future attempts. This year both these

nations will renew their attack upon the interesting problem. The German expedition will consist of two vessels, the "*Germania*" and the "*Greenland*." The former is a screw-steamer of 126 tons, and well adapted to encounter the buffets of the ice-masses which are borne upon the arctic seas. The other is a sailing yacht of 80 tons, and is intended to act as a transport-ship by means of which communication may be kept up with Europe. The "*Germania*" will probably winter in high northern latitudes; and we should not be much surprised if before her return she should have been carried to the very pole. Nor can the prospects of the Swedish expedition be considered less promising, when we remember that last year, though hampered by the lateness of the season and other difficulties, they succeeded in approaching the pole within a distance only a few miles greater than that which separated Parry from the Pole in 1829.

Certainly England has reason to fear that before the year 1870 has closed she will no longer be able to claim that her flag has approached both poles more nearly than the flag of any other nation. There are considerations which make the recent supineness of our country in the matter of arctic travel much to be regretted. In the winter of 1874 there will occur one of those interesting phenomena by which Nature occasionally teaches men useful lessons respecting her economy. We refer to the transit of Venus on December 8th in that year. One of the most effective modes of observing this transit will require that a party of scientific men should penetrate far within the recesses of the desolate antarctic circle. Where are the trained arctic seamen to be found who will venture upon this service? Most of our noted arctic voyagers have earned their rest; and as Commander Davis said at a recent meeting of the Geographical Society, those who go for the first time into the arctic or antarctic solitudes are too much tried by the effects of the new experience to be fit to undertake important scientific labours. He spoke with special reference to the transit of 1882, before the occurrence of which there is fully time to train a new school of arctic voyagers. It is just possible that for the transit of 1874 trained explorers belonging to the old school of arctic travel may still be found. But if not, no time should be lost in supplying the deficiency. It has only been discovered within the last few months that journeys to the antarctic will be required as much for this transit as for the other. The Astronomer Royal has expressed his desire that the discovery may be rendered available by suitable expeditions. "Every series of observations," he remarks, "which can really be brought to bear upon this important determination will be valuable." Therefore, for this reason alone, and even if the reputation of England in the matter of arctic travel were altogether worthless, it would be well that efforts should quickly be made to prepare crews and commanders for the work of 1874, by "sending them to school," as Commander Davis expressed it, "in the arctic seas."



## MADAME DE POMPADOUR.

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If one could create an expurgated edition of history, one might put Madame de Pompadour out of sight; but alas! the eighteenth century, and even the French Revolution, cannot be understood without taking her into consideration. She was possessed of greater power in Europe than any woman of modern times, with the exception, perhaps, of Elizabeth of England, and Catharine of Russia. She was the Sultana of France for twenty years, with the Sultan in leading-strings. Therefore history, with a blush, is obliged to chronicle the doings of the Pompadour.

The President Hainault,—who was one of the little coterie of friends who formed the consolation of the deserted Marie Leckzinska,—met this destructive creature first in 1742.

"I found at Madame de Montigny's," he writes to Madame du Deffaud, "one of the prettiest women I ever saw, Madame d'Etiolles; she knows music perfectly; she sings with all possible gaiety and taste; she has composed a hundred songs, and acts the comedies at Etiolles on a stage as good as that of the Opera."

Destiny seems to have marked her out from her cradle and educated her for the sultana form of existence. She was, as is well known, originally a Mademoiselle Poisson by birth, Jeanne Antoinette Poisson. Her mother was beautiful, but depraved. Her nominal father, M. Poisson, was the son of a peasant. M. Poisson became chief clerk to the famous speculators,—the brothers Paris Daverney,—who, as contractors for the army, had accounts with the French War Office which were found fraudulent. M. Poisson was fixed upon as the chief culprit, and condemned to be hung, a fate which he escaped by flight, and he was hung only in effigy, and lived to get his pardon by intercession with the authorities. He was a cynical, intemperate, vulgar person, who would naturally never have attracted the notice of posterity but for the notoriety of his nominal daughter. She took care to keep him as far away from Versailles as possible; where, however, he would come sometimes, and put her elegance to the blush. On such occasions, however, she always treated him with respect, and, moreover, she paid his debts, gave him one estate, and got him another.

He took little notice of Jeanne Antoinette, however, till her strange fortune was made; but left her, and his wife, and a boy who bore his name, and became the Marquis de Marigny, to the charge of M. le Normant de Tournhem, the veritable father of Jeanne



Antoinette, a rich fermier-général, who took every pains, and spared no expense, in educating the little Poisson ;—for Jeanne Antoinette was one of the most graceful and charming of blonde-haired children, and already full of intelligence, wit, and vivacity. Her mother from the first styled her “un vrai morceau de roi,” and was enchanted with the possession of so bewitching a daughter ; and this the more, as when Jeanne was at the age of nine, a fortune-teller, one Madame Lebon, prophesied that she should become mistress of Louis XV. There can be no doubt about the fact, for in Madame de Pompadour's accounts there exists the record of a pension granted to one Madame Lebon, for having predicted her future elevation. M. de Tournhem gave his protégée an education in which nothing was neglected but morality. She had the very best of masters for every accomplishment suitable to a royal Thais or Aspasia. Jelyotte, of the Opera, instructed her in singing and the harpsichord ; Guibaudet, in dancing ; Crébillon and Lanoue, in belles-lettres and declamation. She was taught to be a most graceful and accomplished horsewoman, and to draw and engrave on copper and stone. Her playing and singing were such, even as a girl, as to excite veritable enthusiasm ; so that in society on one occasion, when Madame de Mailly, the first mistress of Louis XV., was present, the reigning favourite rushed at her and clasped her in her arms with admiration. Such are the strange contrasts which destiny loves to exhibit,—the present and the future mistress of Louis XV. embracing each other !

How beautiful she was may still be seen in her portraits by La Tour, Boucher, and others. She was tall, voluptuously and finely made, with the whitest and smoothest of skins ; her eyes were brown and brilliant ; her teeth were white and small ; her arms round and perfect ; her hands beautiful and fine ; her blonde hair, which she wore only half-disguised with powder, rippled beyond her white temples in the freshest of little waves ; and her small mouth was closed with delicate lips, which had an infinitive cherry-like freshness and fullness, till they became pale and withered with the convulsive bitings which the never-ending affronts and agitations of her Versailles life produced. Her enemies, male and female, at Versailles, in later days, watched the daily withering of these lips, and the gradual emaciation of the round lines of her once-blooming cheek, and found comfort. We must add to these charms of person her taste for dress and for elegance of all kinds, which was exquisite for the time. In matters of this nature she was accepted as sole arbitress ; for no porcelain vase, no sedan-chair, no pen, no slipper, nothing noticeable in dress or furniture comes down from those days without speaking of the Pompadour. Notice in the portrait of La Tour, at the Louvre, the serried rows of light lilac bows of ribbon, called in those days “nœuds de parfaits contentements,” which are arranged across the little low bodice over one of the most graceful of bosoms,

with the lace-trimmed, flowered satin body of her dress cut and scalloped away on either side, and think of what the Pompadour must have been when she was dressed.

Such charms at nineteen were sufficient to turn the head of the nephew of M. de Tournhem, M. le Normant d'Etiolles, and he wanted to marry her ; but his parents held the immoral reputation of the Poisson couple in such loathing, that they refused to hear of the match. Nevertheless, their scruples were overcome, as such scruples are too often overcome, by money. M. de Tournhem was very rich, and offered to give half his property at once to the young couple, and to settle the other half on them, and the marriage was made.

This was Mademoiselle Poisson's first promotion in life,—a step which made her subsequent elevation possible. As Mademoiselle Poisson, she could hardly hope ever to become reigning mistress of Louis XV., but as Madame le Normant d'Etiolles, with the entrée into the gilded salons of the great financial people,—her husband was a *fermier-général*, as was her uncle,—she felt sure of gaining a reputation as one of the most charming women of Paris, and of making her name reach the king's ears ;—for to be royal mistress, and nothing else, was the object of her ambition. It seems strange that when so many great and beautiful ladies, constantly under the eye of the king, were aiming at this position without success, that this little bourgeoisie should have set her heart upon it, and have succeeded without much difficulty ; but there seems to have been a most wonderful conspiracy of destiny, of chance, of all occult and evil influences, to make the Pompadour succeed, and she did succeed. And yet, leaving morality aside, her position as Madame le Normant d'Etiolles was infinitely superior to that for which she longed. She was respected, and might have been adored, by the most distinguished men in France. Her husband was not handsome, but he was passionately devoted to her, and was an upright, honourable man. She had a fine town house, and a splendid country house at Etiolles, near Corbeil. Diplomats and men of letters crowded to her salons. She was fêted and incensed without a thought of self-interest in those days by such men as Voltaire, Montesquieu, Fontenelle, Bernis, and Maupertuis. During the three or four years that she lived with her husband she had two children ; one of whom died, indeed, an infant, but the other, a daughter, was full of grace and promise. On all this her ambitious spirit looked with contempt. Without a thought for the man she had married, she was scheming to break up for ever his life of domestic prosperity and happiness, and to deliver him over to the loves of opera-girls, while she herself should mount to a throne of illicit glory,—where her soul should be devoured by daily and hourly jealousy, anguish, fear, and despair, and be subject to never-ending horrible agitations, to agonising tensions and clenchings

of the nerves, to devouring of the lips and convulsions of the heart, —all in the presence of malignant, envious, and triumphant eyes.

She began to play for her stake very soon after her marriage. As often as the French king went to hunt in the forest of Sénart, near Corbeil, he was sure to be met by a ravishing creature, either on horseback or in a pony carriage, dressed in the most fairy-like fantasies of blue and rose hunting dresses. But these were the passionate times of the royal favour of Madame de Châteauroux, with whom Louis was then too deeply engrossed to allow him to take much notice of the devices of Madame d'Etiolles. However, Madame d'Etiolles' little stratagems were not unnoticed by the Châteauroux, for one evening, in her apartments, when the Duchesse de Chevreuse asked the king if he had seen la petite d'Etiolles, Madame de Châteauroux walked up to her and stamped with her red heel so fiercely on Madame de Chevreuse's foot, that the poor duchess fell down in a faint; and shortly after, at the motion of Madame de Châteauroux, notice was sent to la petite d'Etiolles that she had better desist from appearing at the king's hunting parties at all.

Destiny, however, removed the superb Châteauroux, with her haughty graces and her domineering airs, out of the way of Madame d'Etiolles. The duchess died the tragic death we all know of in the Rue du Bac, just as she had arrived at the very zenith of her ambition. And not long after, at a grand masqued opera ball, in Paris, a lady in a blue domino excited the curiosity of the king, with witty and caustic speeches, and when pressed to unmask, showed him the sprightly features of the lady of the forest of Sénart. She withdrew at once, however, into a circle of friends, contriving to let fall her handkerchief, which the king picked up and threw after her,—upon which, of course, the universal mot was, "*Le mouchoir est jété.*" Madame d'Etiolles happened,—destiny again!—to have a relative in the palace, one Binet, in the very handy situation of valet de chambre to the king, and through Binet's mediation, Madame d'Etiolles became very shortly lodged in the Palace of Versailles, in the very apartments of Madame de Mailly, the enthusiastic admirer of her harpsichord performances, and was supping with the king, and the Duchesse de Lauraguais, the Marquise de Bellefonds, the Ducs of Ayen, Richelieu, and Boufflers, in the little cabinets.

Before, however, Madame d'Etiolles had effected her purpose of getting lodged in Versailles as titled mistress, there was necessarily a preliminary period of seduction and negotiation, during which she had got her husband invited away into the country, to the house of a M. de Savalette. When the poor man was about to return to Paris, his uncle, M. de Tournehem, came and found him, and broke the news to him that his wife was now the mistress of the king. At this M. de Etiolles fell down in a faint. As soon as he returned to his senses, his desperation was so great that it was feared he would

commit suicide. For some time all weapons were taken out of his way, and the inconsolable husband at last, after vainly threatening to go to Versailles and tear her away out of the arms of the king, wrote a suppliant letter, begging her to return, with all the energy of affection and despair. Madame de Pompadour, whose heart must have been made of rock-crystal, had the brutality to show this letter to the king; but Louis XV. disappointed her by saying coolly, "Madame, you have a husband of excellent principles." Nevertheless, it was thought advisable to remove M. de Etioilles from Paris, which it was easy to do, since he was a *fermier-général*, and provincial employment in the south was given him. After being seriously ill with grief, he ultimately succeeded in entirely curing himself of all love for a heartless woman, and in a year and a half he returned to Paris. Madame de Pompadour had been a wife to him for about four years. Of their two children, the son died in infancy, and the daughter lived only to the age of eleven. Madame de Pompadour had taken the precaution of having a separation deed drawn out at the *Châtelet*, on the 15th of June, 1745, immediately after her instalment in the *château* of Versailles.

During the absence of her husband in the south, Madame d'Etioilles had become, by letters patent, the *Marquise de Pompadour*, and it was during this journey that, at one of the provincial dinner-tables to which the *fermier-général*, in consequence of his position, was a frequent guest, he was observed by a country gentleman, who had noticed the civility with which the stranger had been everywhere treated, and had asked his neighbour who he was. "Pouvez-vous l'ignorer?" said his neighbour; "c'est le mari de la *Marquise de Pompadour*." The simple country gentleman knew nothing of either M. d'Etioilles or the newly-created Madame de Pompadour, but wishing to be civil to a stranger, seized the opportunity of a moment's silence to rise, glass in hand, and address M. d'Etioilles thus:—"Monsieur le *Marquis de Pompadour*, voulez-vous bien me permettre d'avoir l'honneur de saluer votre santé?"

Not, perhaps, in all history can be found an example of such a domination as that which Madame de Pompadour established over Louis XV. He was really her superior in knowledge of affairs and of men, and in capacity. For Louis XV. was by no means an ordinary man. He had great talents, and was capable of energy in emergencies. What, then, was the secret of Madame de Pompadour's power over him? It was this. He was governed by his indolence, his ennui, and his sensuality;—and she undertook to govern these. If he was her superior in capacity, she was his superior in will, and he was only too happy to give up to a mistress the power he would never have confided to a minister. But to make her hold on him secure, she had to study his character, and to humour his weakness, to a degree which has never, perhaps, been surpassed. All her

energies, all her quickness of perception, were watchful day and night to keep him in her bonds, and to this she sacrificed every dignity and delicacy of woman. For it was not only for the king that she had to play daily and nightly the parts of Circe and of Scheherazade. She had to defend herself day by day against the contrivances of her enemies, who were incessantly scheming to force a new mistress on the king. Many, and painful, and long were the agonies she had to endure on this score. Not that there was one pang of jealousy mixed up with such agonies! They were the mere convulsions of ambition on the brink of destruction. The beautiful Madame de Coislin gave her many a bitter hour; but her most dangerous rival was the Duchesse de Choiseul Romanet,—who, indeed, extracted from Louis a promise that the Pompadour should be dismissed. But Madame de Choiseul Romanet was betrayed by her own cousin, M. de Stanville, afterwards the Duc de Choiseul; for which service the Pompadour took charge of his advancement, and ultimately made him prime minister. After incalculable pangs and fears of this kind, Madame de Pompadour devised the most ignoble system for attaching the king to her, which it ever entered into the head of a woman to adopt towards a lover. Conscious that the king's passion for herself had faded away, and that she was in no position to recall it, she determined to provide herself other mistresses for the king, but mistresses from whom she would have nothing to fear. A great lady might become a rival, and oust her from her place; but she took care that the small houses of the *Parc aux Cerfs* should not have for inmates any dangerous rivals. Yet still the Pompadour had to be on her guard. Even here a too-fascinating creature, younger than herself, and of superior beauty, might step in. And though she was thus defended, the ladies of the court were still dangerous to her. Should a true rival turn up, adieu to all the splendours of Versailles, to her *loge grillée* at the theatre, where she sat alone with the king,—adieu to the seats for herself and suite in the royal gallery of the chapel of Versailles,—adieu to the crowd of daily worshippers, grands seigneurs, duchesses, and others who crowded to her antechamber every morning, in attendance on the goddess of fortune, whom one turn of the wheel would throw into the mire from which she sprang,—adieu to the long days with the king at La Muette, at the Trianon, at Choisy, at Marly, where, like a veritable queen, she sat by her royal lover and talked with him for hours in face of the whole court,—adieu to the splendid gifts of New Year's Day, to ivory tablets jewelled with diamonds, marked with the arms of France, and containing notes of 50,000 francs, and to other presents, like that of the great diamond of the Duchess of Orleans, valued at 80,000 livres,—adieu to the gorgeous household state which she maintained,—when once the royal exchequer should be closed against her! Her groom of the chamber was a Chevalier d'Henin, a gentleman of one of the best families of Guienne, who unblushingly

waited in her antechamber, and when she went out walked by the side of her sedan-chair with her mantle on his arm. Her waiting-maids were two ladies of good birth. Her steward was a lawyer who wore the cross of Saint Louis. Even the very footman who waited behind her chair at table was a chevalier de Saint Louis; and her yearly expenses have been calculated at one million livres at the least. The most dangerous rivals, however, she ever had to fear at court, in her capacity of prime enchantress to the king, were the king's own daughters. The king began to find a charm in their society, which menaced the influence of Madame de Pompadour. The whole royal family naturally detested her, with the exception of the queen, who was too good-natured to detest anybody; and the daughters of Louis, —Loque, Coque, Chiffe, and Graille,—made a desperate attempt to be as amusing as Madame de Pompadour, and to supplant her by drinking champagne most jovially at the royal supper-tables; but Madame de Pompadour managed to render all these little stratagems nugatory by forestalling the princesses in the occupation of an apartment at Versailles, which placed her in closer communication, by a secret staircase, with those of the king.

The king, indeed, with the exception of the time he gave to hunting, and to his visits to the Parc aux Cerfs, passed nearly his whole life with his sultana. He went into her apartments early in the morning, was present at her toilette, remained with her till the hour of mass, came back with her after chapel, then took soup or a cutlet with her, and did not withdraw till six in the evening. On hunting days he was away, of course, but he supped with her. All Madame de Pompadour's talents of conversation, all the devices of an inventive mind, were put in action to amuse her sultan; all the little tittle-tattle of Paris and Versailles, all the scandal of the time, came rippling from her fluent tongue into the ears of a king who was the greatest conceivable lover of gossip, and most curious of every small detail of private life;—one of whose greatest pleasures, indeed, was the perusal of private letters, selected and unsealed for him in the cabinet noir of the Paris post-office. The king, as is well known, was so much at a loss for occupation, that at one period of life he took to needle-work and tapestry, at another to wood-turning with a lathe; and at Madame Pompadour's, when he had nothing better to do, he would have a delinquent domestic of his mistress's household called up before him for cross-examination, and on one occasion he cross-questioned a footman for two hours, who was accused of having stolen some lace. After talk and scandal, the marquise fell back on her musical accomplishments, and with that perfect grace she possessed, sang and played to the king on various instruments. She had especially the tact of applying herself to the royal humour, of being gay when he was gay, and being serious when he was serious. On these latter occasions it was, however, sometimes not so easy for

her to go wholly with the royal caprice. On one occasion, when the king's humour, as often was the case, took a gloomy semi-devotional turn, he entered her apartments with a volume of Bourdaloue in his hand, and expounded to her the serious reflections which the reading of the sermon had called up, and proposed to re-read the sermon in company with her. The marquise naturally had a frightful dread of any signs of reformation in the king, and she refused to hear the discourse most energetically, and tried to change the subject of conversation, upon which Louis went off to his own apartments, saying, "*Eh bien, je m'en vais donc chez moi continuer ma lecture,*" leaving the marquise in a state of tears and inexpressible anxiety.

The astonishing favour with which the mistress was regarded naturally created crowds of enmities and jealousies. The royal family was, of course, among those most hostile to the Pompadour. As for the queen, she had long given up all hope of reclaiming her husband, and she was as content to see her place occupied with the Pompadour as by anybody else. Indeed, Madame de Pompadour did all she could, by every kind of forethought and attention, to conciliate Marie Leckzinska, and the queen was touched by her humility, and thought that she might be better off thus than with a haughtier rival.

Marie Leckzinska's goodwill was a wonderful protection for the mistress, who made use of the amiability of the queen to fortify her position as much as possible. She got permission to ride in one of the queen's carriages when the court changed its residence, which gave the favourite a position in the eyes of the public very different from that she would otherwise have held; and Marie Leckzinska made no objection to her seat at chapel in the royal gallery. In matters of religion, however, the queen's conscience did not permit her to be so lenient. She refused to allow her husband's mistress to carry one of the church vessels in the ceremony of the Cène, or to be one of the quêtuses on Easter Sunday.

Marie Leckzinska too, in one instance, showed some pleasant malice in her way of receiving Madame de Pompadour, which proved that she was not so resigned as she appeared to be outwardly. Madame de Pompadour entered her apartment one day, before her little court, to pay her respects. She bore a large basket of flowers in her fine hands and arms, without gloves, as etiquette required. As she stood in front of the queen, after making her obeisance, the latter, in a cool way, out loud, and with measured voice, proceeded to make a running commentary on the beauties of the marquise, as though the Pompadour were a statue or work of art, which justified the taste of the king. Her complexion, her eyes, her fine arms, were all the subject of a praise which could not be taken as flattering from the superiority of tone in which it was administered; and finally the queen requested the favourite, as she stood in that awkward attitude, with her basket on her arm, to sing something. It was vain to refuse. The queen insisted, to the



surprise of the company. Madame de Pompadour sang forth, with all the force of her fine voice, a monologue from Glück's "*Armida*:" "*Enfin il est en ma puissance.*" Marie Leckzinska changed colour at this audacious outburst, and her whole court hardly knew what attitude to assume. But the poor queen was too used to humiliation to show any resentment; and not long after she made a visit to Madame de Pompadour at her château at Choisy, at the invitation of the king, who had never been seen to be so attentive to her as on that evening;—which so delighted Marie Leckzinska that she was heard to say, "*Je ne m'en irai d'ici que quand on me chassera.*"

Not so pleasant, however, were the relations of the favourite with the younger members of the family. The young Dauphin, when obliged to give her the accolade of etiquette, thrust out his tongue at her on one occasion, and was banished from court for some time in consequence. All the royal children sought to mortify her as much as possible,—as on one occasion, when they rode in the same carriage to a hunting party with her, and never addressed her a word during the whole ride. But Madame de Pompadour revenged herself fully in her quiet way; for, as the Dauphin grew up, and naturally wanted to assist in the advancement of his friends and attendants, he found Madame de Pompadour before him at every step. She was informed of every vacancy, every office at court, in the army, or in the administration, to be given away, and when the Dauphin applied to the ministers for a protégé, he was always informed it had been already promised to a relative or dependant of Madame de Pompadour; and on one occasion, when a protégé of the Dauphin cried out at the injustice of a nomination over his head, he was, in spite of M. le Dauphin and his protestations, sent off to cool his indignation to the state prison of For l'Evêque.

Once or twice only did the Dauphin and the princesses manage to score a point against her. Madame de Pompadour had, however, to put up with an occasional checkmate from the fine spirit of raillery of some of the old noblesse, who refused to pay court to this bourgeois mistress. The Prince de Conti and she were always at war. She hated the prince because he directed the secret diplomacy of Louis XV., into which she could gain no initiation. The Prince de Conti was, moreover, one of the most capable and honest men in the kingdom, but would do nothing to conciliate the favourite. He was obliged to visit her, nevertheless, one day on the king's business, when she omitted to offer him a seat. The interview was in her bed-room, so the prince coolly seated himself on her bed, saying, "*Voilà, madame, un excellent coucher.*" The marquise behaved just the same to another great seigneur, M. de Beaufremont, who on the occasion tranquilly stretched himself in an arm-chair. The most audacious repartee of this kind, however, came to her from the Marquis de Souvré, one of the most witty courtiers of the time. The marquis,



in an easy way, seated himself on the arm of her own chair till he had concluded his conversation. Madame de Pompadour complained to the king, who spoke about the matter to M. de Souvré. "Sire," replied he, "j'étois diablement las, et ne sachant où m'asseoir, je me suis aidé comme j'ai pu." Louis, who was always good-natured and loved a joke, laughed loudly at the reply; and the marquise could get no redress on M. de Souvré. As for smaller people who offended her, it is well known she filled half the Bastille and other state prisons in Paris. Everybody has heard of Latude and his attempted escape from the Bastille, where he was shut up for forty years at the original motion of Madame de Pompadour; but it is not so well known that his heirs, in 1798, brought an action for damages against the family of Madame de Pompadour for the imprisonment of their father, and that they obtained a verdict in their favour, condemning their opponents to the payment of 60,000 livres, only 10,000 of which, however, were paid.

It may be said that all the world, both within Versailles and without it, were the enemies of Madame de Pompadour,—excepting only they who were attached to her by some obligation past, or the hope of some favour to come; and at the slightest cloud of disfavour her enemies raised their heads and redoubled their endeavours to oust her from her position. To retain a hold upon the king was in itself sufficient occupation for the energies of any ordinary woman, but beyond this she had to be ceaselessly on the watch to guard against the contrivances of the world without; and when we add to all these occupations that of ruling the ministers, making foreign alliance and treaties, and governing or misgoverning the country, it must be conceded that her office was no sinecure.

It is a matter of history that no minister was, in the long run, able to hold his place against her, and she disposed of the first dignities of state and the command of armies just as it suited her caprices. Orry, the Contrôleur-Général, accustomed to the frugal administration of the Cardinal Fleury, having remonstrated against the fresh burst of prodigality of the king towards his new mistress, was replaced by M. de Machault d'Arnonville, a creature of her own;—who, however, having fallen under her suspicions at the time of the Damiens assassination, was then also dismissed. The Marquis d'Argenson, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, having put her out of patience by stammering, was sent into exile. His brother, the Comte d'Argenson, the Minister of War, a more obsequious character, having opposed the Austrian alliance, was dismissed after some years of service. But the greatest difficulties she had to encounter were in the resistance of the Comte de Maurepas, the chief minister, and the Duc de Richelieu, the first gentleman of the chamber. Maurepas, relying upon the support of the rest of the royal family, his own facilities for making work come easy to the king, and the general elasti-

city and caustic frivolity of his character, believed he was a match for the Pompadour, and would make no advances or concessions to secure her favour. Indeed, she attributed to him, and apparently with reason, some of the worst Poissonades which circulated about Versailles. The king, indeed, had a real affection for the frivolous Maurepas; but the minister was soon obliged to give way, and to acknowledge the slippery nature of the ground on which he stood. Louis being all day with the Pompadour, the minister was necessarily obliged to seek the monarch in her apartment to confer with him on matters of pressing importance; but the favourite always contrived so to engross the attention of the infatuated monarch, that he barely gave M. de Maurepas the slightest sign that he was listening to him. If at any time Maurepas contrived really to interest the king, the Pompadour cried out, "Allons donc, Monsieur de Maurepas; vous faites venir à Sa Majesté la couleur jaune. Adieu, Monsieur de Maurepas." On another occasion she insisted on M. de Maurepas' annulling a certain *lettre de cachet* which he had signed. "Il faut, madame, que Sa Majesté l'ordonne." "Faites ce que madame veut," rejoined the king. Maurepas, in his light way, turned these unpleasant scenes into ridicule, and revenged himself by the bitter sarcastic verses which he had an especial talent for writing; and they followed in swift succession, each one more bitter than another. There came forth at last an epigram whose point turned on a malady of the favourite. She bounded into fury and exasperation, and went off to Maurepas herself to demand the names of the authors of the chansons. "Quand je le saurai, madame, je le dirai au roi." "Vous faites peu de cas, monsieur, des maitresses du roi." "Je les ai toujours respectées, madame, de quelque espèce qu'elles fussent." After this the Pompadour was determined on his dismissal at any cost. She affected to believe that Maurepas intended to poison her, for there had been a silly report that Maurepas had poisoned Madame de Châteauroux. She slept always with her physician, Quesnay, in the next room, and with antidotes near to her. She would never eat or drink at table till the dishes or wines had been previously tasted before her; and after wearying the king for some time with such affectations, the weak monarch gave way, and exiled Maurepas to Bourges. It was not so easy for her to get rid of the Duc de Richelieu, who himself, with his libertine, light, courtier air, was almost as indispensable to the king as the Pompadour. Nevertheless, on one occasion when the Duc de Richelieu, as first gentleman of the chamber, had opposed the whims of the Pompadour, the king said to him at his débotté, "M. de Richelieu, combien de fois avez-vous été à la Bastille?" "Trois fois, sire," said Richelieu, with a fallen face. She was not able to prevent Richelieu from obtaining some of the most important military commands; but whenever he met with any such success, she prevented the king from giving him the gracious reception he

expected. Thus when he returned all glorious after the taking of Minorca, all that Louis said to him was, "Maréchal, vous savez la mort de ce pauvre Landsmalt,"—one of the royal huntsmen;—and he added, "Les figures de Minorque, sont-elles bonnes?"

Madame de Pompadour, to say the truth, made the less opposition to a command being given to Richelieu, since she hoped some great failure would bring about his disgrace. "M. de Richelieu, il est assez fanfaron pour vouloir se charger de cela. Il mettra autant de légèreté à prendre une ville qu'à séduire une femme; cela serait plaisant. Il lui faudrait quelque bonne disgrâce pour lui apprendre à ne douter de rien." The miseries and reverses which the incapable creatures of Madame de Pompadour, who were made ministers and generals, brought upon France, are marked in the history of France in characters of blood and shame. The people of France and of Paris knew well enough the authoress of all these calamities, and if she could have been caught at times in the capital, they would have torn her to pieces. In the days of her parasite Machault, there were printed papers distributed about the streets of Paris,—"*Rasez le Roi, pendez Pompadour, rouez Machault.*" And as for the Poissonades, as the bitter verses were called which were written against her, both Versailles and Paris were flooded with them.

To console her, however, somewhat for these violent pasquinades, Madame de Pompadour could have recourse to a large collection of verses of an opposite character, composed by her friends, men of letters and others. At the head of these was Voltaire, who burnt a good deal of coarse incense at her shrine, and was rewarded by being made historiographer of France, an academician, and gentleman ordinary of the chamber.

The Pompadour, indeed, never forgot the pleasant hours she had owed to men of letters before her arrival at her anomalous place of power, and she was willing to befriend any writer when she could. She would have done something for Rousseau, the Genevese owl, as she called him, had not his savage independence repelled her; though the letter which is commonly attributed to him, on the subject of a hundred louis rejected with indignation, is spurious. Marmontel, however, was her great favourite, and every Sunday he, in company with the Abbé de Bernis,—afterwards Cardinal de Bernis,—and Duclos, paid her visits at her toilette at Versailles, and he was indebted to her for his seat in the Academy. She gave Piron, the author of the "*Métromanié*," "*qui ne fut jamais rien*," a pension of 1,000 francs.

Montesquieu was indebted to her for some acts of considerate kindness. Her protection of the publication of the "*Encyclopédie*" is well known. Musicians, sculptors, painters, architects, and artists of all kinds found in her liberal support. She was herself a clever draughtswoman, and engraved in a mediocre way on copper. On

her former talent Voltaire made the best lines he ever wrote for her ; they contain a "divin" or a "divine," of course ;—

"Pompadour, ton crayon divin  
Devrait dessiner ton visage :  
Jamais une plus belle main  
N'aurais fais un plus joli ouvrage."

A good many of her engravings are preserved at the Bibliothèque Impériale in Paris.

Madame de Pompadour had barely been mistress of the king for two years when she began, like Madame de Maintenon with Louis XIV., to despair of her resources for amusing an unamusable king, and called in the theatre to her assistance. She remembered the success which she had achieved on the stage at Etioilles, and she proposed to establish, and succeeded in establishing, the theatre in the château, known as the "Théâtre des Petits Cabinets." To obtain a place among the audience, was one of the great objects of ambition at Versailles. The owners of the greatest names were refused, and the Maréchal Duc de Noailles, in consequence of a refusal, retired for some time in disgust from Versailles. Naturally, therefore, the honour of playing in the troupe was still more solicited. A certain Marquis de V—— gave an important place to a dependant of Madame de Pompadour, on the sole condition that he should play the part of exempt de police in one of Molière's pieces. If we may trust accounts, the acting was universally good, not only in farces, vaudevilles, pastorales, &c., but in high comedy ; and finally a tragedy of Voltaire's, "Alzire," was triumphantly performed.

At the inauguration of this theatre, Madame de Pompadour not only sang and played in several parts, but encountered audaciously the perils of the ballet ; and at the end of the performance, on one occasion, Louis said, enraptured, "Vous êtes la femme la plus charmante qu'il y ait en France."

The cost of this theatre was something frightful ! In one year the accounts of the Duc de la Vrillière reached 230,203 livres. The king, —who, after the first novelty had worn off, often yawned horribly at these performances,—at last suppressed the theatre at Versailles, and it was transported to the château of the marquise at Bellevue.

The effect of the accounts of the performances on the public mind raised apprehensions, and it was supposed the monarch was influenced in his decision by the following passage, in a pamphlet of satirical sketches, after the fashion of Labruyère ;—

"*Lindor*, trop gêné dans sa grandeur pour prendre une fille de centimes, se satisfait en prince de son sang,—on lui bâtit une grande maison, on y élève près un théâtre où sa maitresse devient danseuse en titre et en office ; hommes entêtés de la vanité des sauteuses lauderelles, ne pensez pas que le dernier les Gygès soit mort en Lydie."

But the theatrical extravagances of Madame de Pompadour were nothing in comparison with the millions and millions she squandered away in buying estates, in altering or decorating old châteaux, in constructing new ones. Her largest château was at Crecy, but she had others at Compiègne, Fontainebleau, Saint Ouen, Montretent, La Celle Saint Cloud, at Bellevue, two at Versailles, two or three at Paris, of which one was the palace now known as the Elysée. Her last acquisition was the vast estate belonging to the Marquis de Menars, and she even contemplated purchasing the principality of Neuchâtel from the King of Prussia, as a place of retirement in case of disgrace or the death of the king. The furniture of all these châteaux was of course of the most expensive kind. She was a mine of gold for the tapissiers of the time; and the fêtes she got up at her various residences for the amusement of a blasé king, cost fabulous sums. Every effect that bright illuminations, fireworks, artificial water, gondolas and barges, mummeries and masquerades in silk and satin, and silver-spangled gauze and feathers, could produce, was tried upon the king, and very frequently without success.

She founded, however, two institutions, both of which have been beneficial to France. Of the first, the whole credit of invention and execution is due to herself,—the manufacture of porcelain at Sèvres. The other institution was the military school of the Champs de Mars.

The public hatred against the favourite increased with the duration of her reign, and rose to an alarming intensity during the disasters of the Seven Years' War, in spite of all the pains she took to increase the number of her partisans and flatterers. Madame de Pompadour now spoke of retiring to her estates. Even she felt overwhelmed with the public detestation. She never travelled at this time except well accompanied, and in her journey from Choisy to Versailles went in the middle of a squadron of horse-patrol. Louis himself began to feel a little. He exclaimed querulously, "On me nommait ci-devant le Bien-aimé; je suis aujourd'hui le Bien-haï." He made no attempt at reform, however, though the state of the public mind was such that he no longer ventured to cross Paris, and had a road made by which he might go to Compiègne without going through the capital. The road was called the *Chemin de la Révolte*, and still bears its name.

To console the marquise, she was allowed ducal honours at court, the tabouret in the presence of the queen, the ducal mantle to her coat of arms, and the velvet hammercloth to her carriage. The public execrations had their effect upon her, however; for she endeavoured to change her position in respect to the king, and towards the court. She desired now to maintain only innocent relations with the sovereign, but had no thought of resigning her position as confidential friend and prime minister in petticoats, with her magnificent monopoly of state patronage. She wished, in fact, to preserve all

the golden fruit of her immorality, and to have all the honour due to immaculate virtue.

She put in play an immense deal of hypocrisy and double-dealing to achieve her purpose, and, after one first great repulse, she partially succeeded. Her chief aim was to be named by the queen as one of her ladies of honour, after which the world could have nothing to say to her residence at Versailles. She made this request, but the queen naturally replied that she could not receive her, as she lived apart from her husband and never took the Communion. With every protestation of repentance, and of an intention to lead a devout life in future, Madame de Pompadour applied to a confessor,—no ordinary one,—but a confessor of the order from which the kings and queens of France were wont to select their spiritual advisers,—a Jesuit,—le Père de Sacy. But the Père de Sacy was inflexible. He refused to give her absolution. He declared that however innocent might be her actual relations with the king, yet her very presence at Versailles was a scandal on religion and on morality. Madame de Pompadour was irritated against the confessor and his order, and dismissed him; and hence arose one of the causes of grievance which induced her to support Choiseul in the expulsion of the Jesuits from France.

However, in the end, she accomplished all she wished; for the first objection any confessor would make to her would be that she had left her husband. She contrived, by a hypocritical letter of repentance to M. d'Etiolles, and an offer to return, to extract a refusal from him to receive her. It is true she had him warned beforehand, by M. de Soubise, that the king would be much displeased if he accepted her offer; but this did not operate at all with M. le Normant d'Etiolles, who, since he had been driven by her conduct to sanction illegitimate connections, had become passionately attached to a lady of the Opera. M. d'Etiolles said he wholly forgave his wife, but could not possibly receive her back. Madame la Marquise was now a triumphant, repentant creature. She had done all she could to repair her little sins, and, with all the confidence of rejected virtue, she secured a more convenient confessor, who gave her absolution and the sacrament, and the queen was outwitted;—for the only two objections she could make to the Pompadour's request were thus answered. She was presented, consequently, to the queen, after her nomination to a place in her household, in 1756. But the next year she was in a greater danger than ever of losing her position, on the occasion of the wound received by the king from the hands of the assassin Damiens.

She expected every moment to receive orders to start, for she knew the king had a horror of dying in a state of mortal sin. She was deserted by all the world but her brother, who had become through her influence the Marquis de Marigny, Madame du Hausset her femme de chambre, and the Abbé de Bernis. Machault, the garde des sceaux, who owed his advancement entirely to her, observed

that the king never mentioned her name, and took care to avoid her until he received word from the king to give commands to Madame de Pompadour to leave forthwith.

Her agitation was horrible. Orange-flower water was given her, to soothe her, in a silver cup; for her teeth clenched together so convulsively that she would have crushed a glass. Another hour, and Versailles and its splendours and the golden millions of France would exist no more for her. Her part was played out. No marvel so ambitious a nature ground her teeth in nervous desperation. Nevertheless, in this agony of grief, her trunks had to be packed up. The carriages were ordered, and the coachmen were on the boxes, when the petite maréchale,—the wily, little, unscrupulous Maréchale de Mireport,—the bosom-friend and confidante of the Pompadour,—she who is said to have taken cherry-stones from the Pompadour's mouth as she ate cherries one day in her carriage, to save the favourite's gloves, entered, and cried, "What's all this? What do these trunks mean? . . . Qui quitte la partie la perd." And the marquise remained to triumph once more over all her enemies.

A comment on this crisis of the Pompadour's career is to be found in the correspondence of the Cardinal de Bernis with M. de Choiseul,—both her creatures, and both afterwards prime ministers by her choice. The virtuous indignation of the ecclesiastic at the enmity of the court to his patroness is edifying:—

"Le roi a été assassiné, et la cour n'a vu dans cet affreux événement qu'un moment favorable de chasser notre amie. Toutes les intrigues ont été déployées auprès du confesseur. Il y a une tribu à la cour qui attend toujours l'extrême-onction pour tâcher emprunter son crédit. Pourquoi faut-il que la dévotion soit si séparée de la vertu? *Notre amie ne peut plus scandaliser que les sots et les fripons. Il est de notoriété publique que l'amitié, depuis cinq ans, a pris la place de la galanterie. C'est une vraie cagoterie de remonter dans le passé pour l'innocence de la liaison actuelle: elle est fondée sur la nécessité d'ouvrir son âme à une amie éprouvée et sûre, et qui dans la division du ministère est le seul pont de réunion. Que d'ingrats j'ai vus, mon cher comte, et combien notre siècle est corrompu!*"

But such agonising emotions,—the intense anxiety and watchfulness of her daily life, the never-ending fatigue and weariness which the necessity of being, at every moment, "up to the mark," which her position required, was daily telling frightfully on the marquise. She herself said that her life was terrible,—"*C'est un combat.*" She was, in fact, from morning to night, dancing the tight-rope over a fall to her as horrible as that of Niagara; and the rope, too, might be cut at any moment. She gave way sometimes, and sank down in floods of tears before her brother or Madame du Hausset. She was, however, resolved to die game; and if we can admire spirit and a defiant independence, minus morality, the Pompadour has a right to be admired.

The faded favourite became so ill at last that she was a pitiable object. All the fine lines of her form, the childlike roundness and softness of her limbs, the infantine freshness of her features had passed



away. She was a mere skeleton,—all elbows, and shoulder-blades, and collar-bones; and her smooth, pure cheek and forehead were channeled by care, fatigue, and pain, with hideous wrinkles, which she tried to conceal with a thick crust of artificial white and red. All that remained of her old beauty was to be found in her fine brown eyes, which grew larger and more brilliant with the decay of her person and the emaciation of her face. Alarming symptoms followed close on each other with increasing gravity. The palpitation of the heart became so violent that she had fits of suffocation, till at last her energetic will could no longer support her enfeebled, diseased form, and on a visit to Choisy she was obliged to give way and take to her bed. Louis XV., to do him justice, did not show himself unfeeling as long as she lived. On the contrary, he paid her every attention, and consulted her on public affairs up to the last; and after he had left Choisy for Versailles, the duty of the first gentleman of the chamber was to bring him news of the health of the dying favourite. It was only after she was dead that he made the unfeeling speech which has been recorded of him; and, bad as the man was, it is clear he often said worse things than he meant out of sheer cynical bravado.

The doctors who were called in gave her a slight respite, during which stage of amelioration she was brought to her apartment at Versailles; but everybody and, with others, she herself knew that her case was hopeless. She met death with great courage, regarding it after all as a deliverance from a life which it was impossible to continue; while her presence of mind and her head for business never failed her up to the last. She received her friends graciously as long as she had breath; and made one of them a present of a gold snuff-box, engraved with verses she had composed a day or two before. On the very morning of her death, being warned of her approaching end, she read over her long will and codicils attentively, and dictated a fresh codicil with a number of additional legacies to friends. She had named the Prince de Soubise, her unfortunate general in the Seven Years' War and closest male friend of twenty years' standing, her executor. After this she had herself dressed, had some rouge put on her cheeks, and prepared to receive death as she would have received the king. The Chief Master of the Post-Office, who daily made reports to her of secret correspondence, came and was received as usual,—“pour travailler avec elle.”

On the departure of the gentleman from the Post-Office, the curé of the Madeleine de la Ville l'Evêque, at Paris, was introduced. She accounted herself his parishioner, since her hôtel was in his neighbourhood. She talked cheerfully to him for some moments, and, as he was about to go, detained him with a smile, saying, “Un moment, Monsieur le Curé; nous nous en irons ensemble.” She died very shortly after this pretty speech, at the age of forty-two years and six months.



As for Louis XV., the queen wrote to the President Hainault, a few days after, "Au reste, il n'est non plus question ici 'de ce qui n'est plus,' que si elle n'avait jamais existé. Voilà le monde; c'est bien la peine de l'aimer." Indeed, the king had long ceased to think of her as anything else than an encumbrance. He was tired of her, but had not had the courage to send her away, convinced that a dismissal would be to her a death-blow. He had wept himself ill for Madame de Vintunille, and had wept also for Madame de Châteauroux and Madame de Mailly; but he had not a tear for the Pompadour. Perhaps he reproached her for having made him what he was,—the most despised king in Europe; and this he certainly would not have become under the management of either of his former mistresses,—for all the Nesles had some grandeur of soul. The property of Madame de Pompadour, all with the exception of the legacies, went to her brother, the Marquis de Marigny, who was the most estimable member of her family, and who died childless; after which it went to a relative who had formerly been a drummer in the army, but for whose advancement she had provided in her lifetime. The quantity of furniture she left was so enormous that the sale of it lasted a year, and the auction-room where it was sold was the great sight of Paris during all that time. "It seemed," says a writer, "that all the regions of the earth had paid tribute to the extravagance of the marchioness."

The body of the worn-out favourite was deposited in a vault at the church of the Capuchins, in the Place Vendôme, which she had purchased from the great family De la Trémouille, where she had then lived, to have herself buried alive if the king should leave her. She had already deposited there her mother and her daughter; and, as the Princess de Talmont said, the great bones of the La Trémouille family must have been astonished at finding themselves in company with the fish-bones,—les arêtes,—of the Poissons. Many pretty epitaphs were made for her, of course, and some, indeed, of a character not presentable in the present day, notwithstanding their drapery in Latin hexameters. It would be unjust even to the memory of a light woman to leave out of account that part of the mental agony which wore her to a skeleton, arising undoubtedly from remorse at the ill-success of her political schemes, and for the calamities of the Austrian alliance, and the Seven Years' War which she brought upon her country. And it would be unjust not to state that in later years she strung the whole forces of her nature to endeavour to repair some of the mischief she had done, and to open a career of victory for France. But as she had exiled all the most capable advisers of the crown from the Government, and was served only by the servile and the incapable, her own maceration was of little use to her country. England, however, owes a great deal to Madame de Pompadour, for Chatham had free play over the whole world with the Pompadour as petticoat minister of France.

## THE THREE BROTHERS.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THEIR FATHER.

THE reason why Mr. Renton's sons were sent out into the world in the humble manner, and with the results we are about to record, must be first told, in order that their history may be comprehensible to the reader. Had they been a poor man's sons no explanation would have been necessary; but their father was anything but a poor man. The family was one of those exceptional families which add active exertion to hereditary endowments. Though the Rentons had been well-known people in Berks for two or three centuries, it had almost been a family tradition that each successive heir, instead of resting content with the good things providence had given him, should add by his own efforts to the family store. There had been pirates among them in Elizabeth's time. They had made money when everybody else lost money in the time of the South Sea. Mr. Renton's father had gone to India young, and had returned, as was then called, a "Nabob." Mr. Renton himself was sent off in his turn to Calcutta, as remorselessly as though he had not been the heir to heaven knows how many thousands a year; and he too had increased the thousands. There was not a prettier estate nor a more commodious house in the whole county than Renton Manor. The town-house was in Berkeley Square. The family had everything handsome about them, and veiled their bonnet to none. Mr. Renton was a man who esteemed wealth as a great Power; but he esteemed energy still more, and placed it high above all other qualities. As he is just about to die, and cannot have time to speak for himself in these pages, we may be permitted to describe a personage so important to this history. He was a spare, middle-sized man, with a singular watchfulness and animation in his looks; his foot springy and light; his sight, and hearing, and all his senses unusually keen;—a man always on the alert, body and mind, yet not incapable of repose. Restless was not an epithet you could apply to him. A kind of vigilant, quiet readiness and promptitude breathed out from him. He would have sooner died than have taken an unfair advantage over any one; but he was ready to seize upon any and every advantage which was fair and lawful, spying it out with the eyes of an eagle, and coming down upon it with the spring of a giant. Twice, or rather let us say four times in his life, he had departed from the traditions of the Rentons. Instead of the notable, capable woman whom they had been wont

to choose, and who had helped to make the family what it was, he had married a pretty, useless wife, for no better reason than that he loved her. And partly under her influence, partly by reason of a certain languor and inclination towards personal ease which had crept over him, he had been—as he sometimes felt—basely neglectful of the best interests of his sons. The eldest, Ben, had not been sent to India at sixteen, as his father was; nor had Laurie, the second, gone off to the Colonies, as would have been natural; and as for Frank, his father's weakness had gone so far as to permit of the purchase of a commission for him when the boy had fallen in love with a red coat. Frank was a Guardsman, save the mark, and he a Renton! The eldest surviving aunt, Mrs. Westbury, who was full of Renton traditions, almost went mad of it, so afflicted was she by this departure from them. She had two boys of her own, whom she had steadfastly kept in the family groove, and, accordingly, had the very best grounds for her indignation. "But what was to be expected," she said, "from such a wife?" Mrs. Renton was as harmless a soul as ever lay on a sofa, and had little more than a passive influence in the affairs of her family; but her husband's sister, endowed with that contempt for the masculine understanding which most women entertain, put all the blame upon her soft shoulders. Two men-about-town, and a boy in the Guards! "Is Laurence mad?" said Mrs. Westbury. It was her own son who had gone to the house in Calcutta, which might have mollified her; but it did not. "My boy has to banish himself, and wear out the best of his life in that wilderness," she said, vehemently, "while Ben Renton makes a fool of himself at home." When they brought their fine friends to the Manor for shooting or fishing, she had always something to say of her boy who was banished from all these pleasures; though, indeed, there had been a great rejoicing in the Westbury household when Richard got the appointment. It was but a very short time before her brother's death that Aunt Lydia's feelings became too many for her, and she felt that for once she must speak and deliver her soul.

"Ben is to succeed you, I suppose?" she said, perhaps in rather an unsympathetic way, as she took Mr. Renton to the river-side for a walk, under pretence of speaking to him "about the boys." He thought, poor man, that it was her own boys she meant, and was very good-natured about it. And then it was his favourite walk. The river ran through the Renton woods, at the foot of a steep bank, and was visible from some of the windows of the Manor. The road to it was a charming woodland walk, embowered in great beeches, the special growth of Berks. Through their vast branches, and round about their giant trunks, playing with the spectator's charmed vision like a child, came glimpses of the broad, soft water, over which willows hung fondly, and the swans and water-lilies shone. Mr. Renton was not sentimental, but he had known the river all his life,

and was fond of it;—perhaps all the more so as he found out what mistakes he had made, and that life had not been expended to so much purpose as it ought to have been; so that he walked down very willingly with his sister, and inclined his ear with much patience and good-nature to hear what she had to say about her boys.

“Ben will succeed you, I suppose?” she said, looking at him in a disapproving way, as they came to the very margin of the stream where Laurie’s boat, with its brightly-painted sides and red cushions reflected in the water, lay moored by the bank. It was a fantastic little toy, meant for speed, and not for safety; and Mrs. Westbury would have walked ten miles round by Oakley Bridge rather than have trusted herself to that arrowy bark. She sighed as her eyes fell upon it. “Poor Laurie! Poor boy!” she said, shaking her head. The sight seemed to fill her with a compassion beyond words.

“Why poor Laurie?” said Mr. Renton; but he knew what she meant, and it made him angry. “Of course Ben will succeed me. I succeeded my father. It is his right.”

“Ah, Laurence, but how did you succeed your father?” said Mrs. Westbury. “You had the satisfaction of being the greatest comfort to dear papa. He felt the property would be safe in your hands, and be improved, as it has always been. People say we are such a lucky family, but you and I know better. We know it is work that has always done it,—alas! until now!” she said, suddenly lifting up her eyes to heaven. Truth compels us to add that Mr. Renton was very much disconcerted. He could not bear to hear his own family attacked; but he felt the justice of all she said.

“Well, Lydia, manners change,” he said. “It seemed natural enough in our time; but, when you come to consider it, I don’t see what reason I have for sending the boys away. I can leave them very well off. We were never so well off as we are now. You know I managed to buy that last farm my father had set his mind upon. I don’t see why I should have broken their mother’s heart.”

“Ah, I knew it would come out,” said Mrs. Westbury, with a little bitterness. “Why should Mary’s heart be more tender than other people’s? I have to send my boys away, though I love them as well as she does hers; and people congratulate me on having such a good appointment for Richard. It never occurs to anybody that I shall break my heart.”

“You are a Renton,” said her brother, with some dexterity. “I often think you are the best Renton of us all. But if poor Westbury had lived, you know, he might have contrived to spare you the parting, as I have spared Mary; and——. The short and the long of it is the boys are doing very well. I have no fault to find with them, and I mean to take my own way with my own family, Lydia;—no offence to you.”

"Oh, no; no offence," said Mrs. Westbury, with a little toss of her head. "It is all for my advantage, I am sure. When my Richard comes home at a proper time with the fortune your Ben ought to have made, I shall have no reason to complain for one."

"Ben will be very well off," said Mr. Renton, but with an uncomfortable smile.

"Oh, very well off, no doubt," said his sister, with a touch of contempt; "a vapid squire, like the rest of them. People used to say the Rentons were like a fresh breeze blowing in the county. Always motion and stir where they were! And, poor Laurie!" she added once more, with offensive compassion, as they turned and came again face to face with Laurie's boat.

"I should like to know why Laurie so particularly excites your pity," said Mr. Renton, much irritated. Laurie was his own namesake and favourite, and this was the animadversion which he could least bear.

"Poor boy! I don't know who would not pity him," said Aunt Lydia; "it would melt a heart of stone to see a boy with such abilities all going to wrack and ruin. It is all very well as long as he is at home; but when he comes to have his own money what will he do with it? Spend it on pictures and nonsense, and encourage a set of idle people about him to eat him up. Laurence, you mark my words,—that is just the kind of boy to be eaten up by everybody, and to come to poverty in the end. Whereas, if he had been taught from the first that work was the natural destiny of man——"

"There, Lydia,—there,—I wish you would make an end of this croaking," cried Mr. Renton. "I am not quite well to-day, and I can't bear it. That's enough for one time."

"As for Frank, I give him up," said Mrs. Westbury,—*"a soldier, that can never make a penny,—and, of all soldiers, a Guardsman! I am very sorry for you, Laurence, I am sure. How a man of your sense could give in so to Mary's whims I can't understand."*

"Mary had nothing to do with it," said Mr. Renton angrily; and he led the way up the bank, and changed the subject abruptly. Mrs. Westbury, though she was not susceptible, felt that she must say no more; and they returned in comparative silence to the house. This walk had been taken late in a summer evening after dinner, and in the solemnity of evening dress, over which, Aunt Lydia, who was stout and felt the heat, had thrown a little shawl. As they reached the lawn in front of the Manor they came upon a pretty scene. Mrs. Renton, who was feebly pretty still, lay on a sofa, which had been brought out and placed in the shadow of the trees. Mary Westbury, her godchild, who bore a curious softened resemblance to her mother, sat upright on a footstool by her aunt's side, working and talking to her. The third figure was Laurie, lying at full length on the soft grass. Probably since dinner he had been having a cigar; for

instead of the regular evening coat he wore a fantastic velvet vestment, which half veiled the splendour of his white linen and white tie. He was lying stretched out on his back,—handsome, lazy, and contented,—a practical commentary on his aunt's speech. There were books lying about, which his energetic cousin had been coaxing and boring him to read aloud; but Laurie had only shaken his head at her, ruffling his chestnut locks against the grass: and a little sketch-book lay by his side, where it had fallen from his indolent hand. Mrs. Westbury looked at him and then at her brother. What words could say as much? There lay lazy Laurence, with an unspeakable sentiment of far niente, in every line of him; and he a Renton, whose very ease had always been energetic! Mr. Renton saw it too, and, for once in his life, was heartily ashamed of his favourite son.

"There you lie," said Aunt Lydia, "resting after your hard day's work. What a laborious young man you must be, Laurie! I never saw any one who wanted so much rest."

"Thanks," said Laurence, with a little nod of his chin from the grass. "My constitution requires a great deal of rest, as you say. If you don't mind moving a little, Aunt Lydia, you are sitting on my note-book. Thanks. There are some swans there I should not like to lose."

"And of what use are swans?" said Mrs. Westbury. "I wish you would tell me, Laurie; I am such an ignorant creature, and I should like to know."

"Use?" said Laurie, opening his eyes. "They don't get made into patties, as far as I know;—but they are of about as much use as the most of us, I suppose."

"The most of us have a great deal to do in the world," said Aunt Lydia, growing very red, for she was fond of pâtés; "if you knew how many things have to pass through my hands from morning to night——"

"Yes, I know," said lazy Laurence raising his hand in soft deprecation. "Mary has been telling us;—but what is the use of that, Aunt Lydia? Why should you worry yourself? Things would go on just as well if you let them alone,—that's what I always tell Ben. What's the good of fidgeting? If you'll believe me," continued Laurie, raising himself a little on one elbow, "all the people who have ever made any mark in the world have been people who knew how to keep quiet and let things work themselves out. There's your Queen Elizabeth," he said, warming to his subject, and giving a slight kick with his polished boot to a big volume on the grass; "the only quality she had was a masterly inaction. She kept quiet, and things settled themselves."

"Oh, Laurie! not when she killed that poor, dear, Queen Mary," cried his mother from the sofa. "I hate that woman's very name."

"No," said Laurie, gracefully sinking down again among the grass,

"that's an instance of energy, mother,—a brutal quality, that always comes to harm."

"Laurence, you are a fool!" said Mr. Renton sharply, to his son's surprise; and he turned his back upon them all abruptly, and went in across the soft grass, through the magical, evening atmosphere that tempted all the world to rest. His sister had taken all restfulness out of him. Though he was a sensible man, he was a Renton; and the family traditions when thus recalled to his mind had a great power over him. He went into the library, which looked out upon a dark corner of the grounds full of mournful evergreens; the blank wall of the kitchen garden showed a little behind them, and the room at this time of day was a very doleful room. It was a kind of penance to put upon himself to come in from that air, all full of lingering hues of sunset and soft suggestions of fallen dew, to the grim-luxurious room, in which he already wanted artificial light. Here he sat and pondered over his own life, and that of his boys. Up to this moment they had been a great deal happier than he had been. Like a gust of air from the old plains of his youth, a remembrance came over him of loneliness and wistfulness, and a certain impossible longing for a little pleasure now and then, and some love to brighten the boyish days. He had not been aware of wanting those vanities then; but he saw now that he had done so, and that his youth had been very bare and unlovely. He had scattered roses before his sons, while only thorns had been in his own path; but what if he had kept from them the harder training which should make them men? He sat till the darkness grew almost into night thinking over these things. They were men now,—the lads. Ben was five-and-twenty; Laurie but a year younger; and Frank, the happy boy, was only twenty, glorious in his red coat. Mr. Renton pondered long, and when the lamp came he made a great many notes and calculations, which he locked up carefully in his desk. He had a headache, which was very unusual. It was his wife's rôle in the family to have the headaches; and it did not occur to Mr. Renton that there could be anything the matter with him. It was the heat, no doubt, or a little worry. The ladies had come into the drawing-room when his ponderings were over. It was a large room, full of windows, with one large bow projecting out upon the cliff, from which you could see the river through the cloud of intervening beeches. On the other side the room was open to the soft darkness of the lawn. There were two lamps in it, but both were shadowed; for Mrs. Renton's eyes, like her head, were weak; and the cool air of night breathed in, odorous and soft, making a scarcely perceptible draught from window to window. Mrs. Renton lay quite out of this current of air, which naturally she was afraid of, on another sofa. Mary made tea in a corner, with the light of one of the lamps falling concentrated upon her pretty hands in twinkling motion about the



brilliant little spot of china and silver. She had a ring or two upon her pink transparent fingers, and a bracelet, which sparkled in the light. Mrs. Westbury sat apart in a great chair, and fanned herself. Now and then, with a dash against the delicate abat-jour of the lamp, came a mad moth, bent on self-destruction. Mr. Renton dropped into the first chair he could find, not knowing why he was so uncomfortable, and Mary brought him some tea. The weather had been very warm, and everybody was languid with the heat. They all sat a great way apart from each other, and were not energetic enough for conversation. "Where is Laurie?" Mr. Renton asked; and they told him that Laurie, with his usual wilfulness, had gone down to the river. "There will be a moon to-night," Mrs. Renton said, with some fretfulness; for she liked to have one of her boys by her, if only lying on the grass, or on the deep mossy carpet, which was almost as soft as the grass.

"He has gone off to his moonlight, and his swans, and his water-lilies," said Mrs. Westbury, with disdain; but even she felt the heat too much to proceed.

"The water-lilies are closed at night," said Mary apologetically; venturing to this extent to take her cousin's part; lazy Laurence was a favourite with most people, though he had no energy. Then, all at once, a larger swoop than usual went circling through the dim upper atmosphere of the room, and Mrs. Renton gave a scream.

"It is a bat!" she cried. "Ring, Mary, ring,—I am so superstitious about bats; and Laurie out all by himself on that river. Mr. Renton, I wish you would put a stop to it. I never can think it is safe. Oh, tell them to drive out that creature, Mary! I always know something must happen when a bat comes into one's room."

"No, godmamma, never mind," said Mary. "It is only the light. How should a bat know anything that was going to happen? They come into the Cottage every evening, and we never mind."

"Then you will be found some morning dead in your beds," said Mrs. Renton; "I know you will. Oh, it makes me so unhappy, Mary! and Laurie all by himself in that horrid little boat!"

"Laurie is all right," said Mr. Renton; "he knows how to manage a boat, if he knows nothing else." This was muttered half to himself and half aloud; and then he went to the bow-window and looked out upon the river. The moon had just risen, and was shining straight down upon one gleam of water, which blazed intensely white amid all the darkling shadows. As Mr. Renton stood looking out, a boat shot into this gleaming spot, with long oars glistening, balancing, touching the water like wings of a bird. "Laurie is all right," he said to himself, in a mechanical way. He did not himself care for a thousand bats. But his wife's alarm struck into his own uneasiness like a key-note,—the key-note to something, he could not tell what. It was all so lovely and peaceful as he looked,—soft glooms, soft light, rustling rhythm of



foliage, wistful breathing of the night air over that pleasant landscape he knew so well. After all, was it not better to have the boy there in his boat, than scorching out in India or toiling like a slave in some Canadian or Australian forest? What is the good of the father's work but to better the condition of the sons? But, on the other hand, if life when it came should find the sons incapable? Mr. Renton had been a prosperous man; but he knew that life was no holiday. When it came like an armed man with temptations, and cares, and responsibilities upon that silken boy, how would he meet it? These were the father's thoughts as the bat was hunted out with much commotion, and his wife lay sighing on her sofa. If he had been well, probably, Mrs. Westbury's talk would have had no such effect upon him; but he was not well; and it had made him very ill at ease.

Next day his lawyer came, and was closeted for a long time with him, and there were witnesses called in,—the Rector who happened to be calling, and Laurie himself, all unconscious of what it was about,—to witness Mr. Renton's signature. And within a week, though he was still in what is called the prime of life, the father of the house was dead; and his will alone remained behind him to govern the fate of his three sons.

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE WILL.

THERE was great consternation in the family when this sudden misfortune came upon it. All the bustling household from the Cottage overflowed into the Manor, in the excitement of the unlooked-for event; and the eldest and the youngest son came as fast as the telegraph could summon them to their father's bedside. During the two or three days of his illness the three young men wandered about the place, as young men do when there is fatal illness in a house,—useless,—not liking to go about their usual employments, and not knowing what else to do. They took silent walks up and down to the river, and cast wistful looks at the boats, and dropped now and then into ordinary conversation, only to break off and pull themselves up with contrition when they remembered. They were very good sons, and felt their father's danger, and would have done anything for him; but there are no special arts or occupations made for men in such circumstances. The only alternative the poor boys had was to resort to their ordinary pleasures, or to do nothing; and they did nothing, as that was the most respectful thing to do,—and were as dispirited and miserable as heart could desire.

On the last day of all, they were called up together to their father's

death-bed. He had known from the first that he was going to die; and Mrs. Westbury, who was his principal nurse, and a very kind and patient one, had felt that her brother had something on his mind. More than once she had exhorted him to speak out and relieve himself; but he had always turned his face to the wall when she made this proposition. It was a close, warm, silent afternoon when the boys were called up-stairs; a brooding calm, like that which comes before a thunder-storm; a yellow light was all over the sky, and the birds were fluttering about with a frightened, stealthy look. Even the leaves about the open windows shook with a terrified rustling,—clinging, as it were, to the human walls to give them support in this crisis of nature. The light was yellow in the sick-room, for the patient would not have the day excluded, as it is proper to do. He looked like an old man on his bed, though he was not old. The reflection of lurid colour tinged the ashen face with yellow. He called them to him, and looked at them all with keen anxiety in his eyes.

"Well," he said, "I'm going, boys;—it's unexpected, but one has to give in. I hope you'll all do well. If you don't do well, I'll get no rest in my grave."

"Don't you trust us, father?" cried Ben, who was the eldest, with a thickness in his voice. "We'll do as you have done. That will be our guide. But don't think of us,—think of yourself now."

"You can't do as I have done," said the father; "I started different. Perhaps it is too late now. Laurie, you will not blame me? And, Frank, my boy, it won't make so much difference to you. Frank's but a boy, and Laurie's very soft-hearted—" he said, as if to himself.

"Then it is me you are afraid of, father?" said Ben, whose face darkened in spite of himself. "If I have done anything to make you distrust me, God knows I did not mean it. Believe me now."

"The boy does not know," said Mr. Renton to himself, in a confused way; and then he added more loudly:—"I don't distrust you. You've always been a good lad; but it's hard on you,—ay, it's hard on Ben,—very hard;—I wonder if I should have done it!" said the dying man. They could get very little more out of him as they stood round his bed, grave, sorrowful, and bewildered, looking for other words, for another kind of leave-taking. He bade them no farewell, but mused and murmured on about something he had done; and that it would be hard on Ben. It was not the kind of scene,—of conscious farewell and tender adieu,—the last words of the dying father, which we are so often told of; but perhaps it was a more usual state of mind at such a moment. His intelligence was lost in mists, from the coming end. Energy enough to be coherent had forsaken him. He could do nothing but go over in his enfeebled mind the last great idea that had taken possession of him. "Your mother had nothing

to do with it," he said; "she knows no more than you do. And don't think badly of me. It has all been so sudden. How was I to know that a week after,—is it a week?—without any time to think, I should have to die? It's very strange,—very strange," he added, in a tone of musing, as if he were himself a spectator; "to go right away, you know, from one's business, that one understands,—to—"

Then he paused, and they all paused with him, gazing, wondering, penetrated to the heart by that suggestion. Frank, who was the youngest, wept aloud. Mary Westbury, behind the curtain at one side of the bed, busied herself, noiselessly, in smoothing the bed-clothes, and arranging the drapery, so as to shade the patient's eyes, with trembling hands, and trembling lips, and tears that dropped silently down her white cheeks. These two being the youngest were the most overcome. But there was no hardness or coldness about the bedside of the prosperous man. They had all perfect faith in him, and no fear that he was going out of the world leaving any thorns in their path. His words seemed to them as dreams. Why should they think badly of him? What could they ever have to forgive him? There had never been any mystery in the house, and it was easier to think their father's mind was affected by the approach of death than to believe in any mystery now.

Mr. Renton died that night; and it was on a very sad and silent house that the moon rose,—the same moon which he had watched shining on Laurie's boat. Mrs. Renton, poor soul, shut herself up in her room, taking refuge in illness, as had been her habit all her life, with Mary nursing and weeping over her. Aunt Lydia, worn out with watching, went to bed as soon as "all was over." The lads were left alone. They huddled together in the library where all the shutters had been closed, and one lamp alone burned dimly on the table. Only last night there had still been floods of light and great windows open to the sky. They gathered about the table together, not knowing what to do. Nothing could be done that night. It was too soon to talk of plans, and of their altered life. They could not read anything that would have amused their minds; that would have been a sin against the proprieties of grief; so the poor fellows gathered round the dim lamp, and tried to talk, with now and then something that choked them climbing into their throats.

"Have you any idea what he could mean by that,—about me,—about it being hard?" said Ben, resting his head on both his hands, and gazing steadfastly with two dilated eyes into the light of the lamp.

"I don't think he could mean anything," said Laurie, "unless it was the responsibility. What else could it be?"

"There must always have been the responsibility," said Ben. "He spoke as if it were something more."

"His mind was wandering," said Laurie; and then there was a long pause. It was broken by Frank with a sudden outburst.

"Ben, you'll be awfully good to poor mamma," cried the boy; "she can't bear things as we can." The two elder ones held their breath tightly when Frank's sob disturbed the quiet;—they were too much men to sob with him,—and yet there came that convulsive contraction of the throat. The only thing to be done was to grasp each other's hands silently, not daring to look into each other's faces, and to go to bed,—to take refuge in darkness and solitude, and that soft oblivion of sleep, universal asylum of humanity, to which one gains access so easily when one is young! Stealthily, on tiptoe, each one of Mr. Renton's sons paid a secret visit to the dimly-lighted room, all shrouded and covered, with faint puffs of night air stealing in like spirits through the shuttered windows, where their father lay all quiet and at rest. True tears,—genuine sorrow was in all their hearts; and yet——.

As each went away with a heart strained and exhausted by the first outburst of grief, something of the new life beyond, something that breathed vaguely across them in the dark, like the air from the window, filled the impatient human souls within them. The one idea could not retain undisturbed possession even so long as that. The world itself could no more stand still, poising itself in its vast orbit, than the spirits of its inhabitants. It was not that Ben thought of his new wealth, or Laurie of his future freedom; but only that a thrill of the future passed through them, as they stood for this melancholy moment by the death-bed of their past.

Five days passed thus, each of them as long as a year. Duty and propriety kept the young men in-doors, in the languid stillness; or if they went out at all, it was only for a disconsolate stroll through the grounds, on which, sometimes singly, sometimes in pairs, they would set out, saying little. The funeral relieved them from the painful artificiality of this seclusion. When they met together after it, it was with faces in which there was neither fear nor hope, that the sons of the dead man appeared. Their father had always been just to them and kind, and they had no reason to expect that he could have been otherwise in the last act of his life. The persons present were Mrs. Renton, Mrs. Westbury, her children Mary and Laurence, and the three Renton boys; with the lawyer, Mr. Pounceby, and his clerk, and a few old friends of the family, who had just accompanied them from the grave. They all took their places without excitement. He might have left a few legacies, more or less, but nobody could doubt what would be the disposal of his principal property. The ladies sat together, a heap of mournful crape, at one end of the room. The whole company was quiet, and languid, and trustful. There was no anxiety in any one's mind,—unless, indeed, it was in that of Mr. Pounceby, who did not look to be at his ease.

For the first quarter of an hour he did nothing but clear his throat : then he had a blind pulled up, that he might have light to read by ; then he pulled it down, because of a gleam of the sun that stole in and worried him. His task was such that he did not like to begin it, or to go through it when began. But with the obtuseness of people who have not their attention directed to a subject, nobody noticed his confusion ;—he had a cold, no doubt, which made him clear his throat ;—he was always fidgety ;—they were not suspicious, and found nothing out.

"I ought to explain first," said Mr. Pounceby, "I promised my excellent friend and client,—my late excellent client,—to make a little explanation before I read what must be a painful document, in some points of view. Mr. Ben Renton, I believe your father was particularly anxious that it should be explained to you. He sent for me suddenly last week. It was, alas ! only on Friday morning that I came here by his desire. He wanted certain arrangements made. Boys," said Mr. Pounceby, who was an old friend, turning round upon them, "I give you my solemn word, had I known how little time he would have lived to think it over, or change again, if necessary, I should never have had any hand in it,—nor would he,—nor would he. Had he thought his time was running so short, he would have made no change."

Then there ensued a little movement among the boys, which showed how correct their father's opinion of all the three had been. Frank bent forward with a little wonder in his face, poising in his fingers a paper-knife he had picked up, and looked calmly on as a spectator ; Laurie only woke up as it were from another train of thought, and turned his eyes with a certain mild regret towards the lawyer ; Ben alone, moved out of his composure, rose up and faced the man, who held, as it seemed, their fate in his hands. "Whatever my father planned will no doubt be satisfactory to us," he said firmly. "You forget that we are ignorant what change was made."

Mr. Pounceby shook his grizzled head. "It was a great change that was made," he said ; "but I will not waste your time with further explanation. As you say, what your excellent father arranged, will, I hope, be satisfactory to you all."

He began to read now, but to an audience much more interested than at first. There was, of course, a long technical preamble, to which Ben listened breathlessly, his lips slightly moving with impatience, and a hot colour on his cheeks, and then the real matter in question came.

"Having been led much to think in recent days of the difference between my sons' education and my own, and having in addition a strong sense that without energy no man ever made any mark in this world, I have made up my mind, after much reflection, to postpone the distribution of my property among my children until seven

years from the date of my death. In the meantime I appoint my executors to receive all my income and revenue from whatsoever sources,—rents, interest on stock, mortgages, and all other investments, as afterwards described,—and to hold them in trust, accumulating at interest, until the seventh anniversary of my death, when my first will and testament, which I have deposited in the hands of Mr. Pounceby, shall be read, and my property distributed according to the stipulations therein contained.

“It is also my desire, which I hereby request my said executors to carry out, that my sons should receive respectively a yearly allowance of two hundred pounds. I do this with the object of affording to my boys the opportunity of working their own way, and developing their own characters in a struggle with the world, such as every one of their kindred from the earliest time has had to do, and has done, with a success of which their own present position is a proof. If they shrink from the trial I put upon them, they will be the first of their name who have ever done so. As to the final distribution of the property, in order that no untimely revelation may be made, I request my executors to retain my will in their possession unopened until the day I have mentioned,—the seventh anniversary of my decease.”

Up to this moment all the audience had listened breathless, with a mixture of wonder, dismay, and alarm, to this extraordinary document. It is a mild statement of the case to say that it took them by surprise. The boys themselves rose up one after the other to bear the shock which came upon them so unexpectedly, and bore it like men, holding their breath, and clenching their hands to give no outward expression. Ben was the foremost of the three, and it was with him that the struggle was hardest. His pride was wounded to the quick, and it was strong within him. He was wounded too in his love and respect for his father, of whose justice and goodness he had never for a moment till now entertained a doubt. And then he was ruined,—so he thought. For the first moment he was stunned by the blow. Seven years! Half a man's life,—half of the brightest part of his life,—the flower and cream of his existence. By this time dreams had begun to steal into his heart unawares,—dreams half inarticulate of the life which his father's heir, the reigning Renton of Renton, would naturally lead, tinged with all tender regrets, and loyal to all memories, but still his own life, master of himself and his lands and of the position his forefathers had made for him. It was not possible that he should be unaware that few young men in England would be better endowed, or have a better start in the world than he. Everything was open to him,—a political career, if he chose, the power of wealth, the thrill of independence, and all the hopes of happiness which move a young man. Even while these visions formed in his mind, they were struck by this sharp stroke of reality, and faded away. He grew pale; the muscles tightened round

his mouth; a heavy damp came on his forehead. At one time the room reeled round with him,—a mist of pale eager faces, through which that monotonous voice rose. He was the foremost, and he did not see his brothers. He did not even think of them, it must be confessed. The blow was hardest to him, and he thought of himself.

When, however, the reading reached the point at which we have stopped, Mrs. Westbury, forgetting herself, rose up and rushed to the boys, with a sudden burst of sobs. "Forgive me!" she cried wildly. "Oh, boys, forgive me! I will never, never forgive myself!"

At this interruption Mr. Pounceby stopped, and all the spectators turned round surprised. Then nature appeared in the three young men. Ben made a little imperative gesture with his hand. "Aunt Lydia, you can have nothing to do with it," he said; "don't interrupt us. We must not detain our friends." Laurie, for his part, took her hand, and drew it through his arm. "We can have nothing to forgive you," he said, compassionately supporting her, having more insight than the rest. Frank, glad for his boyish part to be relieved from this tension of interest by any incident, went and fetched her a chair. "Hush!" he said, as the sound of her sobbing died into a half-terrified stillness. And thus they heard it out to the end.

The interruption did them all good. It dispersed the haze of bewilderment that had gathered round the young men. The dust of the ruins falling round them might have blinded them but for this sudden call back to themselves. When all was over, Ben had so far recovered himself as to speak, though his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth.

"We are much obliged to you all for joining us to-day," he said; "I am sure you will excuse my mother, and indeed all of us. She is never very strong. Mr. Pounceby, I know you are anxious to get back to town."

"But, Ben, my dear fellow," said one of the party, stepping forward and grasping his hand, "stop a little. It is not any want of respect to your excellent father,—but it must have been disease, you know. Such things happen every day. You will not accept this extraordinary rigmarole. He must have been out of his mind!"

"We are quite satisfied with my father's will; thanks," said Ben proudly, though with a quiver of his lip, and he looked round for the first time at his brothers. "Quite satisfied," said Laurie once more, with that look of compassion which seemed uncalled for at the moment, when he himself was one of the chief persons to be compassionated. "Quite satisfied," echoed Frank steadily, with wonder in his eyes. Then Mr. Pounceby interposed.

"Mr. Renton was of perfectly sound mind when he executed this document," he said. "I was with him nearly all day, and went through a great deal of business. I never saw him more clear and business-like. On that point nothing can be said."

"Nothing must be said on any point," said Ben quickly. "My brothers and myself are satisfied. My father had a perfect right—. I would rather not enter into the subject. We are much obliged to our friends all the same."

And thus all remark was peremptorily cut short. The neighbours dispersed, carrying all over the country the news of poor Renton's extraordinary will; of how he must have lost his head; and that Ben and the other boys were Quixotic enough not to dispute it. It was monomania, people said; and everybody knew that monomaniacs were sound on all points but one. Before nightfall there had arisen a body of evidence to prove that Mr. Renton had long been mad on this subject. One man remembered something he had said on one occasion, and another man on a second. He had been mad about his family; and the boys must be mad, too, to bear it. These reports, however, did not break the stillness which had fallen on the Manor.—a stillness almost more blank than that of death. The sobs of two women, one weeping faintly over her boys' disappointment, the other wildly in self-reproach, were the only sounds that disturbed the calm of the house. The boys themselves were stunned, and for that day, at least, had not the heart to say a word.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE NEW CAREER.

It was twenty-four hours before the brothers met to consult over their darkened prospects. Their mother could kiss and weep over them, but she was not the kind of woman to direct or guide her boys. Such faint idea as she had in her mind was of a kind which would have entirely defeated their father's purpose. "Never mind, my darling boy," she had said soothingly to her eldest son, though he was already a bearded man, with the stern Renton lines of resolution about his mouth. The poor little woman knew no better than to console him as if he had lost a toy. "We can go on living at Renton all the same. I shall only have you so much the longer. We shall only want a little more economy, my dear," she said. "Perhaps that was what your dear papa meant. He knew how lonely I would be. Why can't we all live together as we have done? I have enough for you all by my settlement, and I am to keep Renton; and when the seven years are past, it will be quite time enough to think of marrying. I should not be against you travelling—or anything, Ben, my dear boy," the poor mother added faltering, seeing the sternness on his face.

"No, mother dear," said her son. "No. What you have is for



yourself. We shall all come to see you ; but we are not such mean creatures as to live on you. Besides, that was not what he meant."

"Then what did he mean?" said Mrs. Renton. "Oh, boys, that I should be driven to blame your dear papa! What could he mean if it was not to keep you a little longer with me?"

"He meant to put us on our mettle," said Laurie; "and he was right. We would be a set of sad lazy fellows if we stayed on here. We'll come and see you, mamma, as Ben says. Don't cry. We none of us want to marry, thank heaven!—at least," said Laurie thoughtfully, "I hope so; that complication is spared at least."

"Dear boys, it is so much better you should not marry too soon," said Mrs. Renton, drying her soft eyes. "He must have been thinking of that. Oh, believe me, Ben, my own boy, it will turn out all for the best!"

"Yes, mother," said Ben, with the sigh of submission perforce, and he went away with his own thoughts; Laurie followed him after a little interval; and Frank, upon whom the shock had fallen more lightly, stayed with his mother to amuse and cheer her. But they all met in the library in the afternoon to have a consultation over their fate. They were brothers in misfortune,—a bond almost as strong as that of nature. It hurt their pride to go over the ground with any other creature, even their mother, who could not refrain from a hundred suggestions as to their father's meaning. But among themselves they were safe, and could speak freely, with the consciousness of having the same meaning, the same impulse, the same pride. They never discussed the will, but accepted it proudly, owing it to themselves, as their father's sons, to make no question. Already their hearts had risen a little from the blank depression of the previous night. It was Frank who was the first to speak.

"I'll tell you what I shall do," he said with the rapid decision of youth. Frank had never been thought clever, though he was reasonable and high-spirited; and, consequently, the decision to him was a less complicated business. "I shall exchange into the line, and go to India if I can. More fun," said the young soldier, trying hard for his old gaiety, though there was still the gleam of a tear in his eye, "and better pay."

"Well, that is easily settled," said Laurie; "and I think very sensibly too. Only one thing we ought to think of. Whatever the others may decide upon, let one of us always be at hand for the sake of my poor mother. He always took such care of her. She wants to have one of us to refer to. We might take it in turns, you know—"

"All right," said Frank, to whom, if he carried out his own plan, such a turn would be simply impossible; but the boy did not think of that. As for Ben, he was very hard at work considering his own problem, and knitting his brows.

"We are like the three princes in the fairy tales," said Laurie, "sent out to find,—what?—a shawl that will pass through a ring, or a little dog in a nutshell. That was to decide which should reign, though. I hope our probation does not include so much."

"I have made up my mind it does," said Ben, with a darker contraction of his brows; "it would be unmeaning else. When the seven years are over we shall be judged according to our works. It's rather a startling realisation, you know."

"Old fellow," said Laurie hastily, "of course I stand up for my father's will through thick and thin; but will or no will, you know Frank and me too well to think either of us would ever take your place."

"I should hope so," said young Frank, leaning half over the table in his eagerness. "Ben can't think us such cads as that."

"I don't think you cads," said Ben; "but I shall stand by the will, whatever it is. I'll fight for my birthright, of course; but since we are placed in this position, Laurie, it's of no use talking. He that wins must have. I shall stand by that."

"Well," said Laurence, "it is easy to tell which is most likely to win; so we need not dispute about it beforehand. The thing in the meantime is,—what to do? I wonder how the fellow set to work who had the ten talents. As for me, I am the unlucky soul with one. You need not say psha! so impatiently. We have got into the midst of the parables, and may as well take example——"

"The question is," said Ben, "not what we have got into the midst of, but what you mean to do?"

Laurie shrugged his shoulders. "It is a great deal easier to talk than to do anything else," he said, "for me at least. I suppose I must take to art. You need not tell me I have no genius," he added, with a slight flush. "I know that well enough. But what else can I take to? Moralising is not a trade; or at least if it is, it's overstocked; and I can't moralise on paper. I must go in for illustrations and that sort of thing. Undignified, perhaps, but how can I help it? There is nothing else I can do."

"A fellow with a university education, and as good blood in his veins as any in England," said Ben, with a little impatience, "might surely do better than that."

"What good will my blood do me?" said Laurie. "Get me a few invitations, perhaps. And as for a university education,—I might take pupils, if I had not forgotten most of what I've learned; or I might take orders; or I might go and eat my terms at the Temple. And what would any of these three things do for me? Fellows that have meant it all their lives would, of course, do better than a fellow who never meant it till now. No; I have a little taste for art, if I have not much talent. I might turn picture-dealer, perhaps. Don't look so black, Ben. A man must make use of what faculty he has."

After that there was a pause, for Laurie did not care to put the same inquiry which he had just answered, to his elder brother. And Ben did not volunteer any information about the part he meant to take. Ben could not evaporate in talk, as Laurie could. He could not make up his mind to his fate, and adapt himself to circumstances. Though his pride had forbidden him any struggle against his father's will, yet in his heart he was embittered against his father. There was injustice in it. Of course, he repeated to himself, fellows who had meant it all their lives must do better than fellows who only began to mean it in necessity. Laurie was right so far. And under this frightful disadvantage their father, of his own will, had placed them. Frank had a profession, and might be not much the worse. But Ben himself had been brought up to be heir of Renton. His heart grew hard within him as he thought it all over. It seemed to him that if he had known it from the beginning he would not have cared. He would have gone in for anything,—what did it matter?—professional work, or trade, or anything, so long as he started fair, and had the same advantages as his neighbours. Now he must thrust himself into something which was already full of legitimate competitors. He sat and looked into the flame of the lamp, and took no notice of his brothers. But their fate added an aggravation to his own. Frank was not so bad; it made less difference to Frank than to any of them. An officer in a marching regiment was as good a gentleman as a Guardsman. But Laurie a poor artist, and himself he could not tell what! The thought galled him to the heart.

"And, Ben, what shall you do?" said Frank. "We have told you, and you ought to tell us. I don't suppose you mean to stay on with mamma. What shall you do?"

"I don't know," said Ben, with a sudden descent into the depths of despondency. He had almost wept as he spoke. One had his profession, the other at least a taste, if nothing more. Poor Ben, the firstborn, had no speciality. He might have been a political man, with a hand in the government of his country, or he might have been a farmer, or he might have gone to Calcutta, as Dick Westbury had done; whereas, now, at five-and-twenty, he could not tell what to do.

"Never mind, you'll do the best of us all;—you were always the cleverest of us all," said Frank, shocked at his brother's dejected looks; and then it flashed across them what their father had said, that it would be most hard upon Ben.

"It is you who have the ten talents," said Laurie, "and Frank has the five; and you will go away one to your farm, and the other to your merchandise,—isn't that how the story runs?—while I am left with one in my napkin. Or, if that is too serious for you, let's take it on the other side. But whatever you do, beware of the old woman whom we are all sure to meet as we set out, who will ask us

to help her, and give us three gifts. I shall keep a very sharp look out for that old woman," said Laurie, breaking the spell of stillness, and getting up. "Laugh at it? Yes, I am trying to laugh a little. Would you rather I should cry?" he said, turning upon his brother, with tears glistening in his eyes. It was a question which it would be. They were all at this point, standing upon the alternative, between such poor laughter as might be possible and bitter tears.

All this sad and wonderful overthrow had come from Mrs. Westbury's indiscreet taunts to her brother upon the up-bringing of his sons. If that could have been any comfort to them, their Aunt Lydia was very miserable. They had never allowed her to finish her confession, and her heart was very sore over the injustice that had been done them. That same night she stole to Ben's door, and would have wept over him had that been possible. She was not an unkind or hard-hearted woman. It had been a kind of pleasure to her to contrast her nephew's idleness with the Renton traditions; but she was a true Renton, strong in her sense of justice, and there was nothing she would not have done for them now.

"Ben, let me speak to you," she said. "I did not mean it,—far from that, heaven knows! I wish my tongue had been cut out first. I know it would go against you to admit such a thing if any one else said it; but, Ben, your father could not have been in his right senses. He never could have done it, if he had known."

"It is a question I can't discuss with you, Aunt Lydia," said Ben, standing at the open door and barring her entrance. "I think you are mistaken. I don't think it could be anything you said."

"Ben, I know it!" said Mrs. Westbury. "I could not be mistaken. Let me come in, and I will tell you. It was done on Friday, and that unfortunate conversation was on Thursday night. He was very snappish to poor Laurie when we went back to the lawn;—but, oh, if I could have known what was to follow it! Ben, I must come in and speak to you; I have a great deal to say. You know, there is our Dick——"

"Yes," said Ben. He had to let her in, though he did it with an ill grace. He placed his easy-chair for her, and stood leaning against the table, to hear what she had to say. He would not countenance or encourage her to remain by sitting down, but stood with his candle in his hand, a most unwilling host.

"You are angry with me," said Aunt Lydia, "and you have reason. But what I want to say is about Dick. If your father had made this move at the right time, it is you who should have gone to Calcutta, Ben. You have the best right. My boy only went, as it were, to fill your place; and he ought to give it up to you now. Of course it was to my brother he owed the appointment. I don't say Dick should come home; but he has made some money and some friends; and, I

think, he might do something for himself still, in another way, instead of taking your place."

"It is nonsense to call it my place," said Ben.

"I don't think it is nonsense; for my part, I think of justice," said Mrs. Westbury. "It would have been yours, had you been sent off six or seven years ago, as you ought to have been. Yes, I say as you ought to have been, Ben, like all the Rentons. None of us were ever fine gentlemen. The men always worked before they took their ease, and the women always managed and saved in our house; but you should not be turned out now, when you were not brought up to it. Ben, my brother was very cross to me that Thursday night. It was not him, poor fellow, it was illness that was working on him. He was not in his right mind; and the will ought to be broken."

"I can't have you say this," said Ben. "I can't let anybody say it. Aunt Lydia, we had better not discuss the question. We have all made up our minds to my father's will, such as it is."

"Then you are very foolish boys," said Mrs. Westbury; "when I, who would stand up for him in reason or out of reason, tell you so! Your father's good name is of as much consequence to me as it is to you. There never was a Renton like that before; but still if it was to stand in the way of justice——! And about Dick. You ought to write to him at once, to tell him he is to look out for something else for himself, and that you mean to take your own place."

"I shall never go to Calcutta," said Ben shortly.

"Then what will you do?" said his aunt. "You can't live on two hundred a year,—at least you were never meant to live on it,—you know that. And you can't live on your mother. Unless you are going out to India what are you to do?"

"I shall find something to do," said Ben briefly; and then he softened a little. "I know you mean to be kind," he said. "I am sure you always meant to be kind; but I can't do any of the things you propose. I can neither question my father's will, nor live on my mother, nor turn out Dick. Let him make the best of it. I should think he had got the worst over now. And don't blame yourself. I don't think you were to blame. There must have been some foundation to work on in my father's thoughts; and it is done; and I will never try to undo it. We must all make the best of it now. Will you do one thing to please me, Aunt Lydia? Let Mary be with my mother as much as you can spare her. She will feel it when we are all gone."

"I will do anything you please," said Mrs. Westbury, melted to tears. "Oh, to think I should have done you so much harm, and be so powerless to do you any good! But, Ben, you have not told me what you are going to do?"

"Because I don't know," said Ben abruptly. He could not come to any decision. His aunt left him reluctantly when they had

reached this point, thinking, notwithstanding her compunction, or perhaps in consequence of it, that if his petition about Mary meant any special regard for her, she would not hesitate to give him her child. "He will make his way," she said to herself; "he will make his way." It was because he was a little hard and stern in his downfall that she thought so well of him; and her feelings were very different as she went prowling through the passages in her dressing-gown to knock at Laurie's door. Poor Laurie! nobody entertained any such confidence about him.

When Mrs. Westbury paused at Laurie's door he was seated with his head buried in his hands before his table, on which lay the ruins, so to speak, of various youthful hopes. Though he had said so confidently that none of them wanted to marry, yet there were one or two notes on the table before him, in a woman's hand, which he had been looking over, poor boy, with a certain tightening of his heart. And there were hopes too of another kind; plans for travel, plans for such study as suited his mind, which it had been his delight to form for some time past, and which he had so little doubt of persuading his father to let him carry out. His little maps and calculations lay before him, all huddled together. That chapter of his life was over. He could smile at the change when they were all together, to help the others to bear it; but grief, and disappointment, and downfall all fell upon him with additional force when he was alone. His eyes were wet when he sprang up at Aunt Lydia's summons, and shouted a "Come in," which was as cheerful as he could make it, sweeping his papers away as he did so into the open drawer of his table. He thought it was one of his brothers, perhaps Ben, come to get some comfort from his lighter heart. When Mrs. Westbury came in he was taken aback, poor fellow; but Laurie was too tender-hearted to be anything but kind to his aunt. He cast down a heap of books, which were occupying the most comfortable seat in the room, and made a place for her, glad to turn away his face for the moment and conceal the tears in his eyes; but these tears would not be concealed. They kept springing up again, though he kept them from falling; and though he smiled, and began cheerfully, "Well, Aunt Lydia!" there was a sufficiently melancholy tone in both voice and face.

"We shall be going away to-morrow, Laurie," said Mrs. Westbury, "and I could not go without speaking to you. Oh, what a week this has been! When I think that it was only last Thursday night——"

"Don't speak of it, please," said Laurie; "one has need of all one's strength. It is bad enough, but we must make the best of it. I wish you were not going away. I thought Mary would stay with my mother. How is she to get on when we are all gone?"

"I might leave Mary, for a little," said Mrs. Westbury doubtfully; "and then we shall be close by at the Cottage, where your

mother can send for us when she pleases. Ah, Laurie, if you had only had a sister of your own ! ”

“ If we had only had a great many things ! ” said Laurie, with an attempt at a smile ; “ but, as for that, Mary is as good as a sister. I never knew the difference. I think she is the best creature in the world.”

“ Yes,” said Aunt Lydia, looking at him keenly, with an inspection very different from her manner to Ben ; “ she is a good girl ; but you always used to quarrel, Laurie. I did not think she was so much to you.”

“ She always thought me a good-for-nothing fellow,” said Laurie, with a little laugh, “ like most other people. I must show you now, if I can, that I’ve got some mettle in me. But, Aunt Lydia, you have not come to say good-bye ? ”

“ No,” said Mrs. Westbury ; and then she made a pause. “ I can’t rest, Laurie ; I can’t keep quiet, and see you all in trouble,—when it is my fault ! ”

“ That is nonsense,” said Laurence decidedly. “ You may be quite sure it had been turning over in his mind for some time ; and quite right, too,” the young man added bravely. “ How could we ever have known what stuff we were made of else ? If there is any good in being a Renton, as you have so often told us, now is the time for it to show.”

“ Oh, Laurie,” said his aunt weeping, “ that is what breaks my heart. You have not a chance now, with the up-bringing you have had, and your poor mother’s soft ways,—not a chance ! If my brother had only thought in time. This will could never stand if it was brought into a court of justice. He could not be in his right mind. Ben would not listen to me when I said so ; but I must speak to you.”

“ You shall speak to me as much as you like,” said Laurie, with his mother’s soft ways, “ but not on that subject. It is sacred for us, whatever other people may think. And after all, you know,” he said with a smile, “ it is but for seven years. I shall only be about thirty at the end of the trial ;—quite a boy ! ”

“ Quite a boy ! ” said Aunt Lydia very seriously ; “ but still I can’t bear it. And, Laurie, though you are the least like a Renton of any of them, I have always been the fondest of you ! ”

“ Thanks, dear aunt,” said the young man, and he kissed her, and led her half resisting to her own room. “ All this excitement and want of rest will upset you,” he said to her tenderly ; “ and, Aunt Lydia, don’t say anything to Frank.”

Laurie went back to his musings and his papers when she had made him this promise ;—and Mrs. Westbury had a good cry over the whole miserable business. “ Upset me ! ” she said to herself, “ as

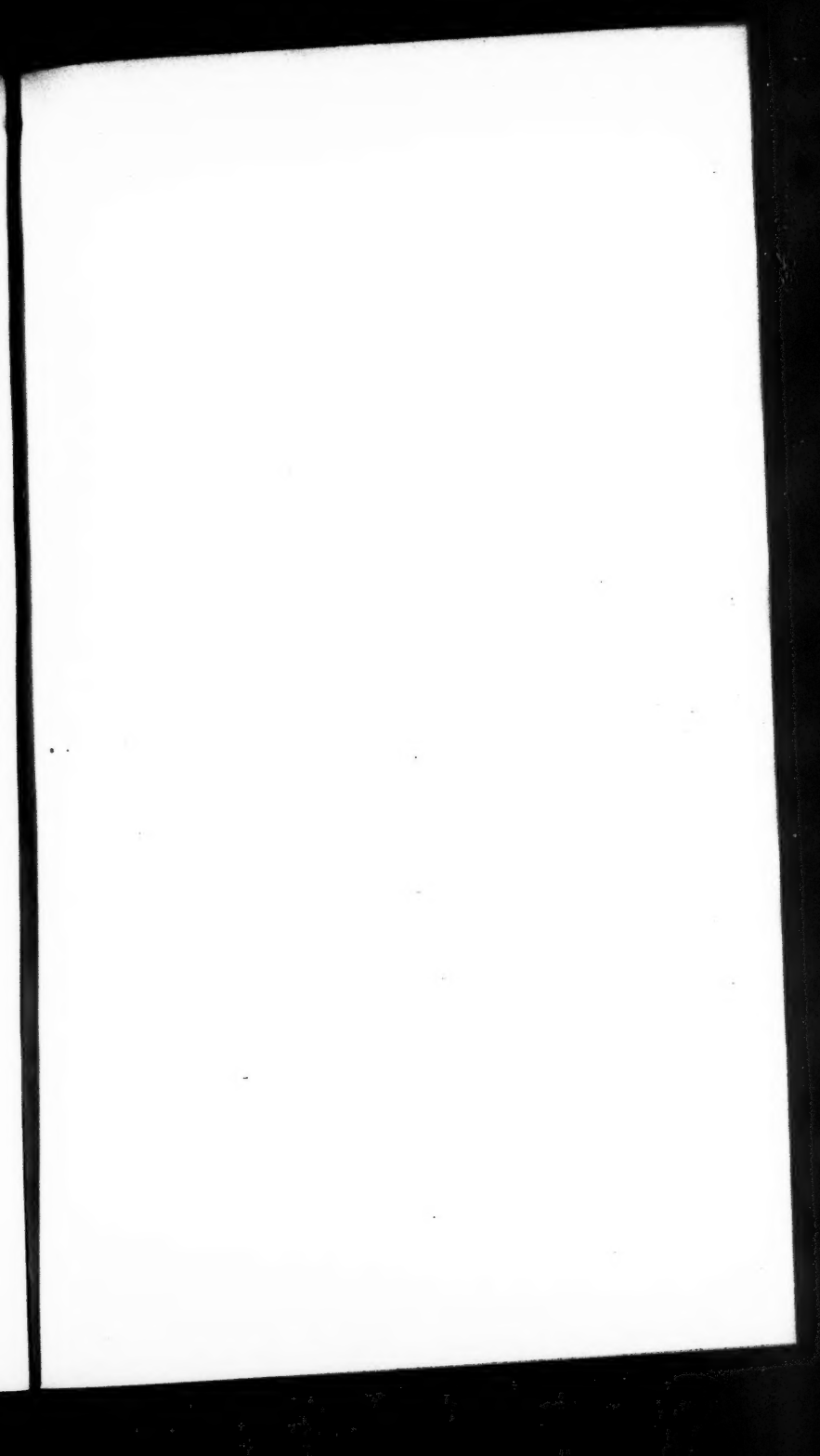
if I was a woman like his mother to be upset! Oh, if I could but do anything for these poor boys!"

But at the same time she was glad in her heart that Laurie thought of Mary only as his sister. A mother has to consider everything; and that could never have been,—though it was a different thing with Ben.

These preliminaries being told, and the singular and unexpected nature of this family crisis fully explained, the historian of the Renton family feels justified in proceeding with this narrative of the fortunes of the three boys, and their adventures in the big changed world, upon which they were launched so abruptly. They all left the Manor together, on a sultry September day, just the day on which, under other circumstances, they would have been off to shoot grouse, or to climb Mont Blanc. Their mourning prevented such invitations as even in their changed fortune they would certainly have received, and the shock was so fresh on all of them that pleasure-making of any kind would have been impossible. They went out as if they had been putting to sea, each man in his own bark, with no very sure compass or chart to rely on, and with minds braced high by resolution, but altogether unprepared for the trial, and unaccustomed to the labour. Perhaps it was as well for them that their ideas were so utterly vague and undefined touching the rocks and shoals and dangerous passages that lay in their way.

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Ben was very reluctant to leave the paradise on which he had thus stumbled, but Hillyard, the neglected one, had got up and stood waiting for him.